

St Olaf Lutheran Church  
239 North 11th Street  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

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Fort Dodge, IA

To:

# The Visitor Newsletter

## February 2025



**Mission Statement: We at Saint Olaf Lutheran Church exist to  
Worship, Proclaim, Serve God and Teach His Word.**

***Deadline for the articles for the visitor  
newsletter is the 15th of every month.***

### Worship Schedule

#### Sundays

9 am Traditional  
10 am Fellowship  
11 am Contemporary

#### Wednesdays

6pm

Sunday services live streamed  
on our Facebook page:  
St. Olaf Lutheran Church, ELCA  
and

[www.stolaffd.com](http://www.stolaffd.com)  
10:30 am 1400 KVFD AM

#### Office Hours

Mon - Thurs  
8:00 - 4:00 PM  
Fridays - Closed

# Note From The Pastor



We tend to be quick judges of other people without really getting to know them. We have implicit bias that we often are not even aware of. Intersectionality explains that when it comes to who you are, there isn't just one part of your personality or identity that stands out. You aren't just a student or a child. You are both. They both work together to make your unique personality and sense of who you are.

In intersectionality, there are multiple overlapping identities (e.g., religion, language, gender, ability, sexuality, race, ethnicity, occupation, etc.) that can oppress a person or a group of people. Markers of identity, like race or sexuality, don't just exist separately, but they all overlap or interconnect when it comes to oppression and power.

For example **I am:** a child of God, a Christian, an ELCA Lutheran, raised Catholic, divorced, remarried, US citizen, white, German, Irish, English speaking, medium income, male, 68 years old, 6'4", 180lbs., good health, college and seminary graduate, extrovert, brother, parent, grandparent, cousin, uncle, pastor, window washer. **I have:** traveled out of the country and throughout the United States, no military experience, lived most of my life in Fort Dodge . . . This is a short list of what makes me who I am.

As children of God we are called by God to intersect with others, recognizing that we share this earth with all of God's children. As we share our faith in Christ who forgives and saves, the Holy Spirit draws people to God's self. "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3: 28).

May your intersections with others shine the light of Christ who abides in you.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Jim





# February 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Office Hours Mon-Thurs 8a-4p</b>						1
2 Council Installation 9&11 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	3 Adult Bible Study 10am  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	4 OLES 9am  Adult Bible Study 6-7pm Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	5 Better Choices 8am  First Communion Classes 4:15-5:15pm Ignite 5:15pm-7pm HS Youth 7:15-8pm	6 Lifeworks 1pm EMS Essential Service Talk 1pm	7 <b>Office Closed</b>	8
9 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	10 Adult Bible Study 10am Book Club 1:30pm  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	11   Committees 6pm Council 6:30pm Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	12 Better Choices 8am Prayer Shawl 1pm  First Communion Classes 4:15-5:15pm Ignite 5:15pm-7pm HS Youth 7:15-8pm	13 Lifeworks 1pm	14 <b>Office Closed</b>	15
16 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	17 Adult Bible Study 10am  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	18 OLES 9am  Beacon Meal - Oles Adult Bible Study 6-7pm Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	19 Better Choices 8am  First Communion Classes 4:15-5:15pm Ignite 5:15pm-7pm HS Youth 7:15-8pm	20 Lifeworks 1pm	21 <b>Office Closed</b>	22
23 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship  6-8 Grade Youth Group 6:30pm-8pm	24 Adult Bible Study 10am  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 5-9pm	25   Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	26 Better Choices 8am  First communion - makeup and bread making Ignite 5:15pm-7pm HS Youth 7:15-8pm	27 Lifeworks 1pm Peace Circle 1pm	28 <b>Office Closed</b>	

## LOOKING AHEAD

March

5th - Ash Wednesday

25th - Owls Party

27th - Peace Circle

Adult Sunday School Class



## BEACON MEAL

February 18 - Oles/Mel Schroeder

Upcoming

March 18 - Property Committee/Doug Seltz

April 15 - Music & Worship/ Janet Meyne

May 20 - OWLS/ Linda Junkman, Viv Nore



## WINTER WEATHER REMINDER

Just a reminder that the office follows the school for winter weather. If the schools start late/d dismiss early/close due to inclement weather the office will too. We will send out an email and text alert letting you know.



If the office is closed, *we ask that there are no gatherings* such as Ignite, Oles, bookclub, etc.

***We want you to stay safe!***



# EMS Essential Service Plan: Webster County

Come listen to Firefighter, Trey Nelson,  
from the Fort Dodge Fire Department  
discuss the plan for EMS to be considered  
an essential service in Webster County.

February 6th, 1:00PM  
St. Olaf Lutheran Church  
Located in the Fellowship Hall





# February Birthdays

Jessica Anderson	2/2
Toryn Bennett	2/2
Lettie Nissen	2/3
Zach Anderson	2/3
Landry McKinney	2/3
Finn Cruz	2/3
Makenzie Kofoot	2/4
Colin Glesne	2/4
Braxtyn Dencklau	2/4
Jolene Hall	2/5
Caden Carr	2/6
Daymek Ashbrook	2/6
Rick Kuhlman	2/7
Tammy Pattison	2/7
Linda Junkman	2/7
Jovie Pearson	2/7
Eric Evans	2/8
Dan Fortune	2/9
Heather Callon	2/9
Evelyn Bygness	2/9
Gary Bygness	2/10
Khalani Ruiz	2/11
Sandy Bratland	2/12
Lynsey Froisland	2/14

Robert Pecka	2/14
Toryn Gailey	2/14
David Osterberg	2/14
DeeAnn Otto	2/15
Melissa Nanninga	2/16
Ashlynn Mills	2/16
Madisyn Mills	2/16
Michael Daniel	2/17
Emmaly Durschmidt	2/17
Isabelle Stickrod	2/17
Ruth Yoder	2/20
Bruce Stottrup	2/20
Joseph O'Brion	2/22
Madigan Peimann	2/22
Jace Johnson	2/22
Deborah Ulstad	2/23
Heather Liska	2/23
Sidney Van Every	2/23
Jaxon Lemon	2/24
Alayne Beshey	2/25
Trisha Carr	2/26
Angela Trost	2/28
Ashley Kuker	2/28
Tammy Kuker	2/29



## BOOK CLUB

The St. Olaf Book Club will meet on Monday, February 10th at 1:30 in the Gather Room. Our book for the month is *The Mitford Affair* by Marie Benedict.

It is set between the two world wars and is about six sisters who were prominent in English society at the time.

Books are available at the church.

Everyone is welcome to come to book club.



## OLES

OLES Meetings are on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 9am. Join them February 4 and 18 for coffee and fellowship.

Please feel free to join them, they only meet twice a month.



**LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!**

## SEW SISTERS



**We need your help and talents cutting and sewing.**

They are in the basement sewing on most Wednesdays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm if you would like to join us.

You may want to call the office to make sure we are there before you come.

## OFFICE HOUR CHANGE

The office is open  
Monday - Thursday 8am-4pm.



## Peace Circle

Peace circle will meet on February 27 at 1:30pm in Room 100. Eileen C will lead and Linda C is bringing treats.

## Bible Study

Join Emma on Mondays at 10am or Tuesdays on February 4th and 18th from 6-7pm. The focus is on the book of Matthew.

## IGNITE/YOUTH GROUPS

**Ignite Schedule**  
**Wednesday Night**  
Dinner at 5:15pm  
Worship at 6pm  
Classes at 6:20pm

**HS Youth Group - Wednesdays**  
7:15-8pm  
*Feel free to bring friends!*

**6-8th Grade Youth Group**  
*Once a Month - February 23*  
Sunday 6:30-8pm

## BAPTISM PLAQUES

If you or your child was baptized in 2024, please stop in and grab their water droplet during office hours Monday-Thursday 8-4pm, during Ignite or on a Sunday before or after service.

## PRAYER SHAWL

The St Olaf Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet Wednesday February 12 at 1:00 pm in room 100. You are welcome to join us for more information about how to make Prayer Shawls and see the beautiful shawls, and have some refreshments and fellowship.

This is a good time to try a new project if you enjoy knitting or would like to learn how to crochet Prayer Shawls. We have patterns and yarn available and someone will help you get started. The Prayer Shawls and Baptismal Shawls are a unique way to share Gods love. Anyone (whether a member of St Olaf or not) who is in need of prayer, hope, and encouragement may receive a beautiful Prayer Shawl.

If you know of someone who would be blessed by a soft, lovely shawl please call the church office or ask Vera Hartman or Jane Wallestad. We need your help to share a shawl. Thank you to all who contribute and help in any way with the St Olaf Prayer Shawl Ministry.



## FIRST COMMUNION

Classes will be on Feb 5, 12, and 19. Feb 26 will be a snow makeup/bread making day. Class will be from 4:15-5:30pm.

**First Communion is planned for Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>.**



You are welcome to choose to come to the 9am or 11am service. There will be a cake reception at 10am in between services.

## IGNITE TEACHERS

We are in need of teachers for Ignite. If you can help, please reach out to Emma Askildson at [youth@stolafd.com](mailto:youth@stolafd.com)



## OWLS

OWLS will have their get together on March 25th. Join them for a special speaker, refreshments and social time.



## PICTURES

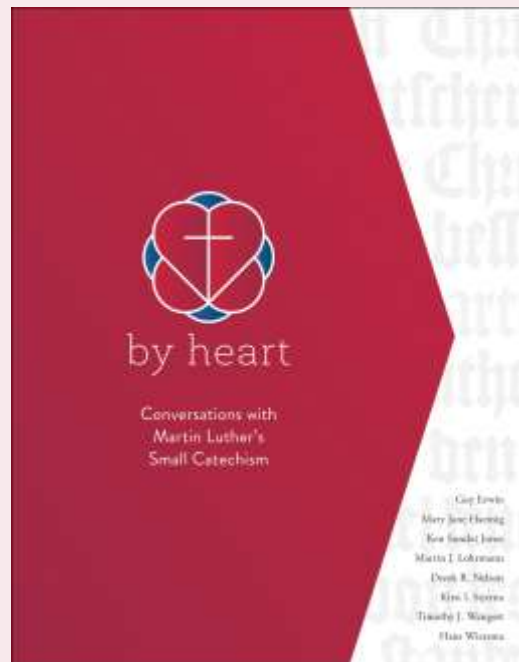
If you ordered pictures from Jacci Photography (Directory Photos) then they are available for pickup in the office. You can get the on Sunday morning, Wednesday nights or during office hours.

## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

JOIN US for an Adult Sunday School class this Lent! Our classes will begin on March 9th in Room 100(next to the kitchen). We will gather from 10am-10:45am. It is a 7 week course entitled “*By Heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism*” by R. Guy Erwin (Author) *By Heart* is a richly illustrated, in-depth exploration of the Small Catechism. It is suitable for group discussion, an adult study or personal enrichment. This guide will generate meaningful conversations about the biblical and historical context of the Small Catechism, its link to the church’s faith, and its connection to Luther’s life and your life today.

**Please sign up by February 16<sup>th</sup> outside of the office.**

**The cost of the participant guide is \$10 each.**



## SYNOD ASSEMBLY

2025 will be a year of transition for the Western Iowa Synod. The voting members of the 2025 Western Iowa Synod Assembly will elect a synod bishop and a synod vice president during the assembly in Sioux City, June 13-14. \*Synod Assembly begins Friday at 1:00 - ending Saturday at 4:00

**St Olaf has open spots for two more voting members.  
Please let one of the pastors know if you'd like to go.**

*Electing a bishop is one of the most important responsibilities in the life of a synod in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a key responsibility of the Synod Assembly. As an election, it is a process governed by the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the synod; however, it is also a call process. As such, it involves discernment, from the perspective both of individual potential nominees and of the synod as a whole. Thus, engaging in prayerful reflection and seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit are indispensable aspects of the process of nomination and election, regardless of the particular provisions in the synod's governing documents.*



**Blessed to have Pastor Emily leading St Olaf for 5 years!**

### Aubree and Brentley Osorio Baptism



*February reminds us of love. Love for the Lord, love for our partners, and love for friends and family. We offer you this story of the power of love between a mother and daughter.*

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

Michelle was struggling with substance abuse, legal issues, and mental health issues when she found LSI therapist Amy Davis back in 2021. “God helps us in ways we don’t always want him to,” said Michelle. “When the coronavirus pandemic hit, I lost my job. The unemployment lines were long at the time, so we went several months without a paycheck, so I decided to get creative with my finances. I started selling drugs and was later arrested with a large quantity of drugs. They came in, took my kid, and I went to jail. After that, I was referred to work with Amy at LSI.”

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

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

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

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

Today, Michelle has her daughter back in her home, she is thriving as a general manager at a coffee shop, and she is going to school for substance abuse counseling. She just received her one-year sobriety chip, and she has a good support system.

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

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

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI’s Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org) or 563-676-2065.

LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://facebook.com/LSI.iowa).



# ST. OLAF FOUNDATION

## **Saint Olaf Foundation 2024 Year in review:**

The Saint Olaf Foundation exist to nourish Christian growth and outreach. We exist through the generosity of the Saint Olaf Congregation.

The Foundation continues to provide financial assistance for grant request made by our community and members of Saint Olaf. This includes scholarships to members who complete an application and write a one-page essay, telling us what their educational plans are, how they are staying connected to their faith, and how this scholarship will help. In 2024 we contributed to over 11 students as they complete their higher education at various community colleges and universities across the state in both undergraduate and post-graduate programs. We contributed to 1 student in health profession with the Mark Olsen Scholarship, and \$7000 to both Luther and Wartburg Seminary. A total of \$31,500 in education support to our members and faith community!

In the past we have worked hard to secure the entire block for Saint Olaf. This vision is leading us forward with the use of our facility to help with the much-needed daycare shortage in our Fort Dodge community and affording us the opportunity to share our Christian faith. We now see a playground full of daycare kids instead of a dilapidated Colonial building. These were some of the long range goals the foundation had set many years ago.

We have been able to assist St. Olaf with a line a credit to get our Capital Campaign, bids, and construction started and now partially finished! With the help of the contributions from St. Olaf members we have been able to contribute \$400,000 to the Capital Campaign over the 3 year campaign period and still assist our members and community with additional grants.

If you or an organization that you are part of has a request for funding, please visit our Saint Olaf website or pick up a grant request from the office.

Unfortunately, markets have not always been generous the past couple of years and the Foundation has been affected. Additionally, the generous gifts have drained some of our investments. Although we, as members of St. Olaf, continue to contribute to the St. Olaf Capital Campaign, I ask you to consider the opportunity to contribute to the Saint Olaf Foundation. With your contributions we are still able to achieve our mission. We continue to monitor our investments and make adjustments when necessary so we may achieve our goals of benevolence.

I would like to acknowledge the work of fellow Saint Olaf members on our foundation, without their interest and help we could not move forward.

We meet quarterly on the 4th Tuesday of January, April, July, and October.

Have a good 2025 and don't forget or please remind our scholarship applicants to have your application in to the church office by March 1st , 2025.

Aaron Peimann  
Saint Olaf Foundation President.



# ONLINE GIVING



venmo

@STOLAFFD



STOLAFFD

## The Lord's Cupboard

Just wanted to send everyone an update on the Lord's Cupboard. We are currently serving around 1200 people a month, that is up from an average of 930 a month last year. We are truly blessed and have no major needs at this time. We can always use personal hygiene, household cleaning and paper products (toilet paper, paper towels). I do want to let everyone who drops off donations know that our office manager Lindsay has taken a new job. FUMC is currently looking for a replacement so someone is not always here.

Best time to drop off would be Monday 8-12pm  
Tuesday 8-2:00pm  
Thursday 8-12:00pm  
Someone from the Lord's Cupboard will be here and can help.

You can always call and arrange a time with us if those times don't work. Shari and I would be glad to help



# Monthly Treasurer's Report

## December

Operating Balance 11/30/2024.....153,119.83

### Receipts:

Offerings.....78,963.37  
Campaign Gifts.....9,312.00  
Misc. Receipts.....-5,295.98  
Total Receipts for December.....82,979.39  
Add Voided Check.....373.96  
Account Correction.....360.82

### Disbursements:

Benevolence.....0.00  
Pastoral Ministry.....33,477.40  
Administration.....1,799.60  
Worship & Music.....2,893.30  
Christian Education.....2,267.20  
Our Church Home.....6,999.48  
Congregational Life.....-1,807.56  
Youth Ministry.....-1,721.24  
Social Ministry.....1,493.97  
Stewardship.....41.54  
Daycare.....-3,710.66  
Building Improvements.....5,039.99  
Misc. Campaign Expense.....255.78  
Loan Repay – Foundation.....1,000.00  
Total Disbursements for December.....-47,028.80

**Operating Balance 12/31/2024.....189,805.20**

# PASTORAL ACTS & STATISTICS

## WORSHIP

### ATTENDENCE

### Service Times

Day	Date	9am	11am	6pm	WEATHER	Totals
Sunday	12/22	69	42	-	Cold/Cloudy	111
Sunday	12/24	171-4pm	107-7pm	-	-	278
Sunday	12/29	74	-	One	Service	74
Sunday	1/5	66	28	-	Cold	94
Wednesday	1/9	-	-	25	-	65
Sunday	1/12	76	37	-	Cloudy	113
Wednesday	1/15	-	-	66	-	66
Sunday	1/19	46	27	-	Frigid Cold	73
Wednesday	1/22	-	-	69	-	69
Sunday	1/26	71	60	-	Sunny/Cold	131

## *Welcome to the Lord's Family*

*Aubree Osorio*

*1/26*

*Brentley Osorio*

*1/26*

*Lord Welcome into  
Your Kingdom*

*Johnna Friesth*

*December 25, 1930 -*

*January 1, 2025*



### CHURCH STATISTICS

Weddings: 0

Baptisms: 2

Funerals: 1

# **ST. OLAF LUTHERAN CHURCH— COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**Carey Bligard - President**  
**Richard “Butch” Forbes - VP**  
**Pamela Bygness - Treasurer**  
**Amanda Warren - Secretary**  
**Doug Seltz - Property**  
**Chris Dutcher – Youth**  
**Vera Hartman - Stewardship**  
**Juli Springer – Long Range Planning**

**Kim Peimann – Social Concerns**  
**Mason Liska – Youth Rep**  
**Janet Meyne – Music & Worship**  
**Jenni Szalat – Life & Growth**  
**Jessica Mericle - Education**  
**Monica McCullough**  
**Linda Ulstad**  
**Jim McColley**  
**Emily Sauer-Alvarez**

**Because of scammers contacting our council members this information will remain private.**

**Please contact the office if you need contacted by a council member and they will connect you with them.**



## **KINGDOM KIDS - BOARD MEMBERS**

**Kathy Dencklau**  
**Sheri Morud**  
**Doug Seltz**  
**Sue Seltz**  
**Emma Askildson**

**Carey Bligard**  
**Keely Draper**  
**Dawn Farr**  
**Kim Peimann**

