

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

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Fort Dodge, IA

To:

The Visitor Newsletter

August 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

Done until Fall

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

www.stolaffd.com
10:30 am 1400 KVFD AM

Office Hours

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

Note From The Pastor



God's Love Made Real

With what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:6-9 NRSVue)

In June five of us attended the Western Iowa Synod Assembly at the church of the Nativity in Sioux City. The theme was, "Make God's Love Real." The Scripture from Micah hit home as to the challenge that faces us in the years ahead as the Body of Christ. We are to emulate walking the path that Jesus tread bringing the Good News of forgiveness, healing and hope to all as his humble servants. This is what we were looking for in the bishop we would choose to lead us on that way. Pastor Scott Dalen whose name came from the floor of the Assembly was the one who came off as that one and was elected as our bishop for the next 6 years. Bishop Elect, Scott Dalen accepted the call with much emotion and humility with an eye for working together as church together for the good of all.

The Western Iowa Synod Budget Committee presented a narrative budget that highlighted the importance of our benevolence with a clear understanding of where the funds were distributed. In 2024, 55% of the budget went to Churchwide Mission Support and Local & Global Ministry. (See copies on table just outside of the sanctuary).

As Lutherans our main objective is to be authentic in spreading the Good News of Jesus' love for all in sacrificial giving of self for the life of all who believe in the saving grace of God. This year's Assembly special offering of \$14,000 went to the Pig Project which pays for pigs to be processed that would otherwise be destroyed. This ground pork is then donated to local food pantries. This is one of the ways that we serve others in Jesus' name.

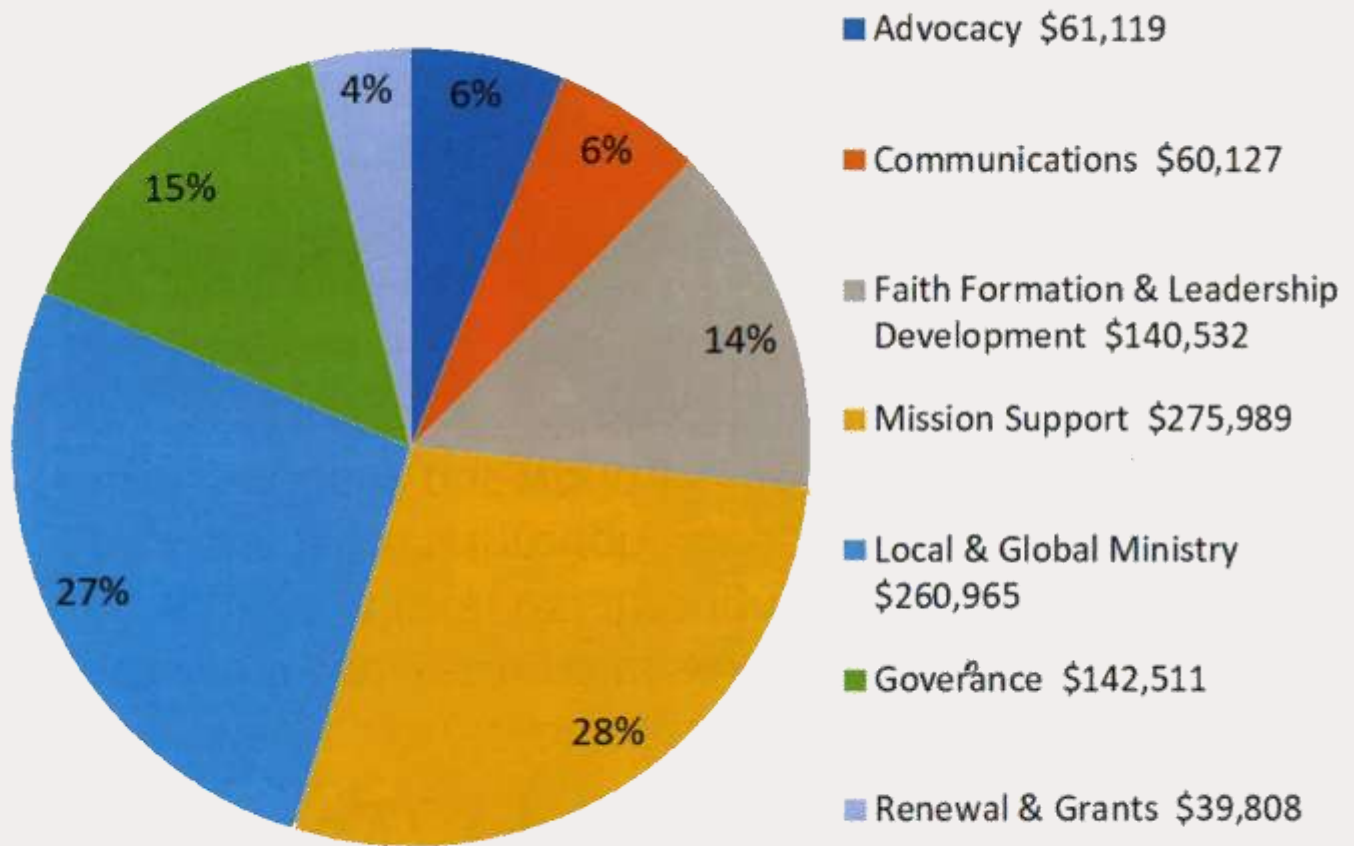
A major concern that was addressed at Synod Assembly was the dwindling of rumps in the pews and insufficient numbers of pastors due to retirements and fewer candidates to replace them. Judy Johnson, Associate to the Bishop for Call and Care has been encouraging congregations to share pastors with neighboring churches, to identify and lift potential lay leaders as Synod Authorized Ministers, to investigate the use of technology to provide live-streamed resources. She concludes that we exist as the church to connect our faith with a larger world, who need to hear the Good News as we welcome all to the table of God's grace.

This has been happening at St Olaf as we have a vibrant Kingdom Kids Day Care that is nurturing young kids with the love of Christ with chapel time and recently with Vacation Bible Study. Several families have been Baptized and become members. The Wednesday Ignite program of a meal, worship, and teaching is meeting families in a space of time that fits their schedules. Our many outreach programs keep us connected to our local community with the love of Jesus.

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God? Keep up the good work St Olaf, that the Lord Jesus Christ is doing through you.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jim

2024



August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Office Closed	2
3 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	4 6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	5 OLES 9am Boy Scouts 6-8:30pm	6 Better Choices 8am	7 Lifeworks 1pm	8 Office Closed	9
10 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	11 6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	12 Boy Scouts 6-8:30pm	13 Better Choices 8am	14 Lifeworks 1pm	15 Office Closed	16
17 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	18 6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	19 OLES 9am Beacon Meal - Christian Ed & Youth Boy Scouts 6-8:30pm	20 Better Choices 8am	21 Lifeworks 1pm	22 Office Closed	23
24 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	25 6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	26 Newsletter Folding 1pm Boy Scouts 6-8:30pm	27 Better Choices 8am	28 Lifeworks 1pm	29 Office Closed	30
31 One Service 10am						

Looking Ahead

September

1st - Office Closed

10th - Ignite Kickoff

17th - Ignite Classes Start

23rd - OWLS

25th - Peace Circle



October

5th - Pet Blessing

12th - Annual Meeting

13th - Prayer Shawl

26th - Confirmation (9am only)



BEACON MEAL

August 19 - Christian Ed & Youth - Chris D & Jessica M

Upcoming

September 16 - Stewardship - Vera Hartman

October 21 - Foundation - Aaron Peimann

November 18 - Long Range Planning & At Large - Juli Springer,
Monica McCullough, Bev Davis



PASTORAL CARE OR PRAYERS

If you or someone you know wants pastoral care or prayers, please call the office at 515-576-2103. You can choose 0 to reach the office directly during business hours. You are also welcome to send an email to office@stolaffd.com



SCAM ALERT

Please know that Pastor Emily, Pastor Jim, council members as well as anyone from St Olaf will NEVER text you asking for money, gift cards, donations. While we do occasionally ask for donations, those requests will come via printed announcements and newsletter articles.

If you are unsure whether or not it may be a scam, please reach out to a pastor or the church directly if you have any questions before you give any money or buy any gift cards.





August Birthdays

Cameron Beck	8/1
Joshua Berg	8/1
Lorrie Davis	8/2
Jade Flatgard	8/3
Jane Wallestad	8/4
Clay Sortedahl	8/5
Shirley Petersen	8/5
Donna Smith	8/6
Sandra White	8/7
Zachary Angstrom	8/7
Becky Petersen	8/8
Steve Sanford	8/8
Eric Puls	8/9
Shannon Mills	8/10
Erica Conley	8/10
Debra Krug	8/10
Judy Van Alstine	8/11
Mackenzie Larson	8/11
Joel Ulstad	8/12
Jacob Berg	8/13
Barbara Jensen	8/13
Ashton Nokleby	8/13
Jonathan Pederson	8/14
Carrie Clausen	8/14
Marilyn Pederson	8/14
Michael Schroeder	8/15
Travis Morus	8/16
Beverly Fortney	8/16
Keaton Grove	8/16
Roxanne Leadley	8/16
Scott Michelfelder	8/16
Andrew Smith	8/16
Samuel Vonsak	8/16
Dawn Wesley	8/16

Stephanie Beeghley	8/17
Pamela Bygness	8/17
Grant Williams	8/17
Donald Miller	8/18
Jerry Norstrude	8/18
Craig Hamilton	8/18
Chris Dutcher	8/19
Susan Mortensen	8/19
Dave Wooster	8/20
Kasen Flatgard	8/21
Mary Johnson	8/21
Gracie Miller	8/21
Aaron Peimann	8/21
Logan Ulstad	8/21
Jill Grindberg	8/23
Nancy Hamilton	8/23
Rylee O'Brion	8/23
Martha O'Brion	8/24
Melba Shelby	8/25
Brent Petersen	8/27
Elaine Egli	8/28
Francis Long	8/28
Rae Nanninga	8/28
Lincoln Pearson	8/28
Ronica Poldervaart	8/28
Kathleen Thorson	8/28
Gloria Kinseth	8/29
Judy Lang	8/29
Randy Bowman	8/30
Eileen Carroll	8/30
Chase Grove	8/30
Dawn Grove	8/30
Kirsten Williams	8/30
Liliana Foster-Azua	8/31

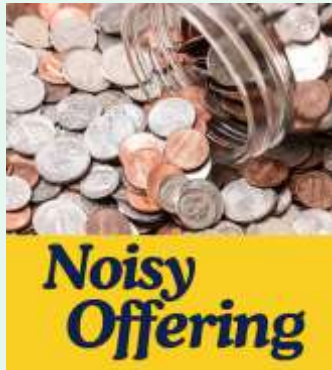


Noisy Offering

Thank you to those who donated to the noisy offering on June 29. We raised \$372 for the mission trip. The next noisy offering will be on August 31.

Our next noisy offering will be on August 31. The funds raised will go towards supporting flood victims in Texas through Lutheran Disaster Response.

If you'd like to give sooner, you can scan QR code



OLES

Join the Oles on August 5th and 19th at 9 am in the Fellowship Hall.

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

Men of all ages are welcome!

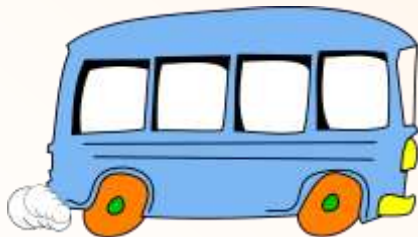
**LOOKING FORWARD TO
SEEING YOU THERE!**



BUS DRIVER NEEDED

We need an occasional bus driver. Driving the bus is not a requirement! It's super easy and only 1-2 riders. You're welcome to drive a church van or your own car.

This is an easy task and a great way to serve the church!



ONE SERVICE SUNDAYS
10AM

AUGUST 31

Please mark your calendars!

SEW SISTERS

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

The Sew Sisters have been busy sewing dresses, shorts and dolls for missions; fidget quilts for hospital patients; and baby and children's quilts for Kingdom Kids Daycare. Some of us sew at the church on Wednesday afternoons and others sew at home. We have lots of fabric and supplies but could use more help.



Please call Nancy Hamilton if you'd like to be a part of our Sew Sisters family.

We enjoy it, and it's always good to help others.

Peace Circle

Peace circle will start up again in the fall on Sept 25.



IGNITE VOLUNTEERS

We will need volunteers for teaching Ignite classes this year. Please let the office or Pastor Emily know if you will be able to help.



Ignite kicks off on Sept 10th and classes will start on Sept 17th.

Sew Sister Mission Project

Our Sew Sisters send dresses, dolls, and shorts with a GoServ Global mission team to Guatemala in May. We sent a long a photo of some of our Sew Sisters because the team asked for it to show the kids who made the items they received. One little girl carried the picture around with her all day. Another little girl wore 'her' dress all week. What a blessing to them and to us.

We continue this sewing project (and other) and we invite anyone who is interested to get involved. Besides sewing, we're cutting and putting together kits for others to sew.

Below are pictures we received of some of the girls and their dresses.



HIRING

We are looking to hire for our Youth and Family Director (full-time) position!

Qualifications: Have a strong growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Competency in Christian theology, Lutheran doctrine, and youth ministry is required. Possess the attributes of enthusiasm, sociability, maturity and motivation. A Bachelor's degree preferred, in General education and/or Christian education is preferred. Two years of ministry experience in Christian Education or a related field required. Effective communication and collaboration skills with children, youth, adults, peers, and management (Pastor and Personnel Committee members) as well as strong follow-up skills. Flexible schedule, being able to workdays, evenings, and weekends as needed. High level of creativity and organizational abilities. Proficient in the use of Microsoft applications and web-based environments.

The full job description is available on [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com). If you know anyone who might be interested, please have them email their resume to office@stolaffd.com.



OWLS GATHERING

A special thank you to Tonya Nore who came and talked about her journey through drug addiction and recovery.



Vacation Bible School



Carmen Ortiz was born in Charco, Nariño, Colombia. At 11, her family relocated to Buenaventura, where she finished high school and watched her father build a small business. Violence in the region forced the family to move again — this time to Bogotá, in search of safety and stability. In Bogotá, Carmen reconnected with a childhood friend who would become her life partner. Together, they launched *Frutería*, a fruit-selling business Carmen successfully operated for 17 years. During that time, she also became a mother to her son, Adiel Jesús.

In 2023, violence once again disrupted their lives. Fearing for their safety, Carmen and Adiel fled to Ecuador and applied for asylum through the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Life in Ecuador was grueling. “We were homeless. I had to sleep with my son under a bridge,” she recalls. “He got sick and had to be hospitalized.” After more than a year, IOM helped process their immigration status and arranged travel to the U.S. In July 2024, they arrived in Houston — exhausted, hungry, and unsure of what came next. The guide assigned to help them was rarely available. Desperate for help and food, Carmen approached airline staff to ask about a delayed flight. “We were so hungry. I just wanted to know when our flight would leave and instead, three employees brought us full meals. I started to cry. I had just arrived, and people were already helping me.”

Their flight to Des Moines departed at midnight and landed at 2 a.m., where they were welcomed by Chuck, a caseworker from LSI (Lutheran Services in Iowa). He brought them to a hotel, where Carmen remembers feeling overwhelmed. “I was scared and confused. I remember thinking: Are we safe? Are we okay?” Sixteen days later, LSI helped Carmen and Adiel move into their first apartment. From that point, life began to change. Carmen enrolled in English classes, received assistance with legal paperwork, healthcare, and food — and soon found two jobs: one with Des Moines Public Schools, and another at Sam’s Club. “I’m incredibly grateful. LSI helped me with everything.”

But life without a car in a Midwestern winter was difficult. Carmen walked long distances through the snow, waited for buses, or spent \$60 a week on rideshares, just to get to work and get her son to school. During a routine check-in, Carmen’s caseworker Shaima heard about these challenges and referred her to Duaa, an IDA Specialist at LSI. Duaa introduced her to the matched savings program, which helps participants purchase essential assets — like a car — through financial education and support. “I’d wake up my son very early so we could catch the school bus from our old address. Then I’d rush to work and still be late.” Carmen had already saved \$2,000 on her own, knowing a car would be vital for her family’s stability.

Through LSI’s Individual Development Accounts program, she opened an account at Veridian Credit Union, completed budgeting and asset-specific classes, and received one-on-one coaching from Juan Lourido, Business Development Specialist at LSI. Juan helped her understand financing, credit, and how to identify reliable used cars online. With his help, Carmen purchased a safe, fuel-efficient 2015 Toyota Prius that fits her family’s needs and budget. “I never thought I could buy a car especially one that was safe and good quality. Now I take my son to school and go to work. That means everything to me.”

She also opened a secured \$500 credit card to begin building her credit history. “These classes helped me prepare for when income slows down in the summer. I feel independent now, especially with the car.”

Today, Carmen is preparing for her driving test, building a new life, and planning for the future. “When we left Colombia, we were running from threats and violence. Now I’m getting used to a new life, looking for opportunities to grow, maybe buy a house, and support my son’s education.” When asked to describe her journey in one word, she answers without hesitation:

“Apoyo” — Support.

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI’s Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at 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 and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.*



ST. OLAF FOUNDATION

The St. Olaf Foundation met in the spring quarter to continue our conversations on how we can support our church and continue our mission of outreach. Our most recent contributions included 16 scholarships for St. Olaf college students, 2 seminary scholarships, and awarding the Mark Olson Scholarship. Additionally, we supported our VBS program and Church of Damascus Road.

Karine Feddersen



Next month's article: Mark Oester

Foundation Board Members

Aaron Peimann - *President*
Karine Feddersen - *Secretary*
Bob Younie - *Treasurer*
Carey Bligard
Jerry Burmeister
Keely Draper
Darlene Hansen

Jill Matthes
Mark Oester
Laurel Puls
Megan Ruzicka
Doug Kinseth
Pastor Emily Sauer-Alvarez
Pastor Jim McColley



JOIN "BY THE BOOK"
EVERY MONDAY FROM 6-7PM
AT ST OLAF LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN THE FIRESIDE ROOM DOWNSTAIRS

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.



Monthly Treasurer's Report

June

Operating Balance 5/31/2025.....207,839.71

Receipts:

Offerings.....	23,156.47
Campaign Gifts.....	3,470.00
Misc. Receipts.....	-881.60
Total Receipts for June.....	25,744.87
Voided Check.....	551.91

Disbursements:

Benevolence.....	0.00
Pastoral Ministry.....	28,049.23
Administration.....	-2,717.48
Worship & Music.....	985.60
Christian Education.....	44.94
Our Church Home.....	-653,859.93
Congregational Life.....	1,575.81
Youth Ministry.....	0.00
Social Ministry.....	0.00
Stewardship.....	42.89
Daycare.....	11.90
Building Improvements.....	765,806.71
Misc. Campaign Expense.....	57.78
Total Disbursements for June.....	149,451.90

Operating Balance 6/30/2025.....84,684.59

PASTORAL ACTS & STATISTICS

WORSHIP

ATTENDANCE

Service Times

Day	Date	9am	11am	6pm	10am	WEATHER	Totals
Sunday	6/29	60	25	-	-	Cloudy	85
Sunday	7/6	-	-	-	71	Sunny - 76°	71
Sunday	7/13	59	21	-	-	Sunny - 70°	80
Sunday	7/20	89	25	-	-	80°	114

Congratulations and God's Blessing

Rory and Lehr Walling
7/17/2025

Alex and Ana Bushman-Briones
7/12/2025



CHURCH STATISTICS

Weddings: 2
Baptisms: 0
Funerals: 0

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

Claudia Harms– 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





ST. OLAF STAFF

Pastor Emily Sauer-Alvarez
Pastor Jim McColley
Jade Bedel, *Office Manager*
Sheri Morud, *Financial Mgr/Asst Daycare Director*
Jason Swedlund, *Organist & Choir Director*
Matt Drees, *Contemp. Worship Coordinator*
Carey Bligard, *Council President*
Anna Miller, *Bell Choir/Wedding*
Kathy Dencklau, *Daycare Director*

A special thanks to our St. Olaf Visitor Newsletter Volunteers:

*Melba Shelby
Lucy Larson
Monica McCullough*

*Linda Cartee
Colleen Lynch*

*Eileen Carroll
Rae Nanninga
Vera Hartman*

To the Visitor readers:

***Please let us know if your address or phone number has changed
at 515-576-2103 or office@stolaffd.com***