

# THE CALLER

AMERICAN LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
CASTLEWOOD, SD

Volume 31, Issue 6, July/August 2026

## ***"Illuminate" – P.T.'s Practical Theology***

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*  
John 1:1-5

In June, Brenda McKee Almos and I led the youth of ALC on the summer mission trip to Nashville, Tennessee. We worked inner-city ministries under the direction of *Group Ministries*, a partner organization that set up our worksites and provided for our stay in a local church. We shared the week with youth from a church from Peoria, Illinois, a Christian Academy from Ohio, and an Episcopal Diocese from South Carolina.

The theme for this year's mission trips was *"Illuminate"*, based on the scripture above.

In our morning and noon devotions, as well as in our evening worship services we explored the ways in which Christ Jesus brought the divine light into our lives which had become darkened by sin. We then examined ways in which Christ calls us to be reflectors of His truths, His grace and His mercy to all that we may encounter.

Thus, our service for the folk in urban Nashville and its surroundings was always brought back to our calling to radiate Christ through word and deed. Now, each of our youth will have their own take on what most impacted their lives of faith. And for me, that was my contact with the local volunteers who served so faithfully through the mission site that I was in. Volunteers who gave weekly of their time to shed Christ's light through their time and energy.

As each of us were encouraged to *"illumine"* our own hometowns with Christ's light, we also ask for you to join us in re-dedicating part of your time, talent and treasure in deeper service through our congregation and other serving ministries within our area.....that together we may *"shine His light, to the praise of His glory!!"*

In Christ's Service,

*Pastor Tom Christenson*



### Missionary Sunday

On July 12<sup>th</sup> we will be joined in worship by Pastors Neeraj and Nijhar who are Global Mission workers with our North American Lutheran Church (NALC). During the worship they will share about their partnership with our denomination to serve the Lutheran congregations of Northern India. This husband/wife pastor team are also serving through the World Mission Prayer League. At the June Church Council meeting it was decided to designate \$2,000 to these mission partners from our missions' budget.

### Youth Summer Mission Trip -

**Brenda Almos and Pastor Tom lead 8 youth on an urban ministry trip to Nashville Tennessee from June 13-20th. They served with "Group" Ministries, where they met, and worked with other young people also doing Mission work. They also got a chance to walk Downtown Nashville & Pastor bought a special hat!**



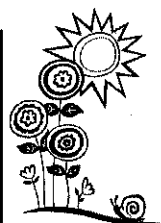
### Community Vacation Bible School Report

Our Vacation Bible School was held June 1-3, 2026 at American Lutheran Church from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. We had 93 Pre - 6<sup>th</sup> grade kids attending, 46 student leaders, and 19 adult volunteers, and 5 college student leaders. Our VBS week was sponsored by American Lutheran Church, Bemis Holland Presbyterian, First Presbyterian Church, Hamlin Reformed Church, and St. Francis Catholic Church. Adults from all 5 churches worked together to coordinate, plan, and implement VBS.



The children's offering collected during the week provided \$497.84 and 84 food items for our local food pantry-Blessings Center.

You can watch a rebroadcast of American Lutheran church service on our channel and also with **YouTube ITC television**'s Video On Demand.



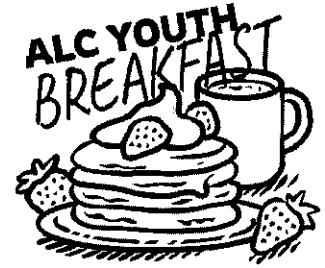
Items that you wish to borrow from the church, please contact Pastor Tom or Janell to coordinate the use of those items. Thank you!



## Castlewood Days 2026

### Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup>

7:30-10:00 Youth Pancake Breakfast at the Community Center



### Youth (Grades 7-12) and their Families:

We need your help to serve the Pancake Breakfast on August 15<sup>th</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> Shift – 6:30-8:30 – set up, grill the sausage and start to make cakes!

2<sup>nd</sup> Shift – 8:30-10:30 – grill, serve and clean-up!

Please email Brenda at [blmckee96@gmail.com](mailto:blmckee96@gmail.com) for which shift(s) you can serve.

### Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup>

9:00 Worship at ALC

10:00 Fellowship at ALC

10:30 Pancake Brunch served at the Picnic Shelter by the Presbyterian Men

11:15 Community Worship at the Picnic Shelter



*The Pie & Ice Cream Social was a success!*

*It was well attended!*

*Deposited: \$835.00, Expenses: \$305.00, Net: \$530.00*

### ALTAR GUILD

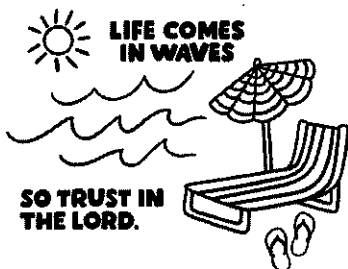
Altar Guild takes care of the communion ware, change altar clothes, banners and fill oil candles when needed. Thank you for your service.

July: Brenda Almos & Heidi Lewno

August: Roxanne Bass & Everson

If there is a need for pastoral care please contact ...

Pastor Tom Christenson  
605-956-0130



### Stay Connected This Summer

Summer schedules can be full, but staying connected matters. Be sure to check the bulletin, newsletter and social media for updates on worship, events and opportunities to serve. We are grateful to walk through this season together as a church family.

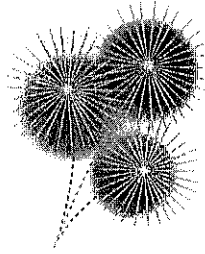
# July 2026



Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 4th **Independence Day!**
- 5th 9:00 a.m. **Worship Service with Holy Communion**  
10:00 a.m. **Fellowship**  
12:30—1:30p.m. *Blessing Center Open*
- 12th 9:00 a.m. **Worship Service**  
10:00 a.m. **Fellowship**
- 19th 9:00 a.m. **Worship Service with Holy Communion**  
10:00 a.m. **Fellowship**  
12:30—1:30p.m. *Blessing Center Open*
- 26th 9:00 a.m. **Worship Service**  
10:00 a.m. **Fellowship**



*America stands on two great pillars — faith and morality. Without these, our foundation crumbles.*  
—George Washington



### The Servants of our Lord

	Organists	Ushers	Audio-Visual Tech
July 5	Roxanne Bass	Darin & Traci Laue family	Chuck Juntti
July 12	Marsha Kurtenbach	Mark & Angie Larson family	Chuck Juntti
July 19	Roxanne Bass	Carmen & Haley Pewe family	Doug Strait
July 26	Marsha Kurtenbach	Chuck Juntti & Bob Miller	Rod Fischer

**Sign-up SHEET**  
for  
**LECTORS &**  
(Scriptures sheets available)  
**FELLOWSHIP SERVERS**  
*in the narthex*



# August 2026

## PRAYING OVER a new school year



Su Mo Tue We Th Fri Sat

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

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 2nd** 9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion  
10:00 a.m. Fellowship  
12:30—1:30p.m. Blessing Center Open
- 9th** 9:00 a.m. Worship Service  
10:00 a.m. Fellowship  
10:15 a.m. Church Council
- 15th** Pancake Feed
- 16th** 9:00 a.m. Worship Service  
10:00 a.m. Fellowship  
10:30 a.m. Pancake Brunch (Ballfield Shelter)  
11:15 a.m. Community Worship (Ballfield Shelter)  
12:30—1:30p.m. Blessing Center Open
- 23rd** 9:00 a.m. Worship Service  
10:00 a.m. Fellowship
- 25th** First Day of School at Castlewood
- 30th** 9:00 a.m. Worship Service



*The  
Servants  
of  
our  
Lord*

	<i>Organists</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Audio-Visual Tech</i>
August 2	Roxanne Bass	Diane Koosman Al Schichenmaier	Chuck Juntti
August 9	Marsha Kurtenbach	Carson & Cassidy Borer family	Chuck Juntti
August 16	Roxanne Bass	Phillip & Jess Ruml family	Doug Strait
August 23	Marsha Kurtenbach	Larry & Pat Dockter	Rod Fischer
August 30	Karen Lund		Chuck Juntti



LaRoy Wiersma	7-05
Shelly DeKam	7-09
Richard Fischer	7-09
Dale Hattendorf	7-12
Laken Vetter	7-14
Darin Laue	7-18
Casey Kenyon Jr.	7-20
Erin Ruesink	7-23
Carla Gerber	7/23
John Top	7-26
Hannah Wiersma	7-28
Drew Ruml	7-31
Tess Jankord	7/31



Travis & Melissa Prohl  
July 10

Jordan & Erin Ruesink  
July 28



Travis Prohl	08-04
Craig Bass	08-05
Marc Lewno	08/07
Jessica Ruml	08-09
Kay Zimiga	08-11
Charlsey Laue	08-12
Londyn Pribbenow	08-12
Drake Langenfeld	08-14
Abbey Strait Leo	08-14
Paula Grupe	08-17
Tara Nolte	08-14
Dan Davis	08-18
Julie Fischer	08-20
Andy Smith	08-22
Heidi Lewno	08-23
Justin Ries	08-26
Mason Nielsen	08-27
Jennifer Hanson	08-30
Christina Kenyon	08-31

Tracy Laue	7-02
Lawson Vetter	7-02
Duane Selchert	7-03
Shawn Prohl	7-06
Jerrold Bass	7-09
Garrett Karst	7-09
Doug Strait	7-13
Shelly DeKam	7-14
Alisha Nielsen	7-15
Jordan Ruesink	7-16
James Mickey	7-18
Sharon Hattendorff	7-19
Ted Sutton	7-20
Vicki Strait	7-21
Bonnie Bucher	7-23
David Prohl	7-24



Darin Laue	8-02
Tristan Nielsen	8-03
Veriti Smith	8-03
Dale Hattendorf	8-06
Emery Larson	8-17
Hannah Wiersma	8-19
Laken Vetter	8/24
John Top	8-26
Richard Fischer	8-29

Joshua & Sara Nei	—	August 3
Dennis & Vicki Strait	—	August 10
Lynn & Kristi Borer	—	August 11
John & Bonnie Bucher	—	August 11
Tom & Janet Christenson	-	August 20
Heidi & Marc Lewno	—	August 20
Lance & Calonna Craig	-	August 24
Kevin & Amanda Pribbenow	—	August 29
Darin & Tracy Laue	—	August 30





- Youth Account: No changes needed.

It was also agreed that any current accounts that do not have a DBA American Lutheran Church of Castlewood, SD associated with them should have this.

A motion by Andy Smith with a second by Danny Davis to approve the above changes relating to financial accounts. **MC**

**Next Meeting:** Scheduled for June 7th, 2026, following Worship.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Mark, second by Andy to adjourn. **MC**

**Closing Prayer:** The council ended the meeting with The Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted, Mark Larson, Secretary

*Mark D. Larson*

## ONLINE GIVING

Our congregational website: [americanlutheranchurch.com](http://americanlutheranchurch.com) now has a link on the home page for online donations: **DONATE NOW**. From that link, you can set One-time, Weekly or Monthly Offerings.

If you point the camera on your cell phone at the QR code it will take you to the donation page.



## Our Faithfulness in Giving

	General	Building	Mission	*Children	*Blessing Center
5/3/2026	\$2,300.00	\$5.00	\$204.00	\$14.00	\$50.00
5/10/2026	\$1,826.00		\$304.00	\$14.00	
5/17/2026	\$1,176.00	\$5.00	\$158.00	\$3.00	\$30.00
5/24/2026	\$1,826.00		\$125.00		
5/31/2026	\$9,495.00		\$132.00	\$7.00	
6/7/2026	\$2,790.00		\$129.00	\$4.00	
6/14/2026	\$1,016.00		\$323.00	\$8.00	\$25.00
06/21/2026	\$2,390.00		\$136.00	\$6.00	
6/28/2026	810.00	\$5.00	\$128.00	\$3.00	

\*Childrens and Blessing Center amounts are included into the Mission account totals.



*Heavenly Father, help us to remember that we belong to you. Touch us, heal us, bless us. Walk with us daily that we may have the courage and faith to meet all life's challenges. Amen.*



*The American Lutheran Caller*

*P.O. Box 132*

*Castlewood, SD 57223*

*Address Service Requested*



**WATCH US ON YOUTUBE & ITC!**

*American Lutheran  
Church's  
Mission Statement*

The mission of American  
Lutheran Church is to

**welcome,  
worship,  
teach and  
serve**

In the name of Christ our Lord  
and Savior!



**[americanlutheranchurch.com](http://americanlutheranchurch.com)**

**2026 Church Council Members**

Joann Fischer, President

Lindsey Vetter, Vice President

Mark Larson, Secretary

Doug Strait, Treasurer

Jesse Ruml

Dan Davis

Al Schochenmaier

Andy Smith

Amanda Pribbenow

John Bucher