# THE CALLER

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
CASTLEWOOD, SD

Volume 31, Issue 8, November 2026


## *"Let us vow to render thank-offerings"* - P.T.'s Practical Theology

*"In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me? I must perform my vows to you, O God; I will render thank offerings to you. For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life."* Psalm 56:10-13

Do you know who, from your family, is hosting Thanksgiving this year? If it's you have you bought the turkey? Have you made the lefse? Have you considered how many pies you will need?

Well, as we ready ourselves to celebrate our National Day of Thanksgiving, we ought to remember that **it is to God** that we ought to render thanks for all His provisions to us as a nation, and to us as individuals.

The notion of giving thanks to God is, of course, prevalent throughout both the Old and New Testaments. In fact, the English translation of "thanksgiving" is used 42 times, and widen that to include the word "thanks", and we have over 160 uses in the Bible.

For the people of the Old Testament, God had established a way for them to give thanks to Him through offering at the tabernacle and then at the temple Sacrifices of Thanksgiving. In addition, there were tithes and offerings that were made with thanksgiving to God for the care of the widow, orphan and those most in need.

In the New Testament, the tithes and offerings continued to be made to the apostles and to the establishing churches as ways to support the local church, provide for the spread of the Gospel and to provide for those who are truly in need.

We are certainly to be heirs of these Biblical practices in giving our thanksgivings to God, sharing in the support of His church, and in the care of those less fortunate. Even though this is still for us a Biblical command, we are to give thanks and give our offerings as a true expression of our faith in the God who has *"delivered our souls from death"* which had allowed us to *"walk before God in the light of life"*. Thus, not out of obedience to a command, but out of true faith and trust in God, we *"vow to render thank offerings to Him"!*

May God, in the power of His Holy Spirit, cause us to be so filled with thanksgiving, that we render to Him our time, talents and treasures in measure with the abundance in which He has so blessed us!

With Thanksgiving to God!
Pastor Tom

# ALC's Community Thanksgiving Dinner!
# Sunday, November 22rd from 11:00-12:30




On Sunday, November 22nd we will host a community meal from 11:00-12:30. The Church Council is looking for assistance in coordinating, cooking, serving and new this year: **Delivery!**

We will offer the public a chance to pre-order full meals for local delivery. Those who want one or more meals delivered must call and leave a message at (605) 793-2444 before noon on the 21st, with name, address and number of meals. These will be delivered between 11:30-12:00.

**Sign-up sheets** are in the narthex for those willing to deliver, help serve, and provide desserts.

Please contact Andy and Sarah Smith..... lilwestychic07@hotmail.com or (605) 520-9774 if you have questions.

**Looking for roasters—approximately 8.**

**Looking for volunteers to help cook and set-up on Saturday.**

**Looking for volunteers to help serve & clean up on Sunday.**

**Looking for people to make desserts.**

**Looking for volunteer drivers to deliver meals from 11:30—12:00.**

**Sign up sheets in the Narthex.**



*Sunday, Nov. 22, 2026*

*9:00 a.m. Sunday School*

*10:00 a.m. Worship*

*11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Thanksgiving Meal*

**Community Thanksgiving Eve Worship:** Wednesday, November 25th 7:00pm at Bemis-Holland Presbyterian Church (46648 180th St., Clear Lake)

Driving Directions: East on Hwy 22, under the interstate for 2 more miles to the Goodwin Road. North on the Goodwin Road to the WaterTower, then West app. 1.5 miles.

Come, join with our area churches as we give thanks to God for His innumerable gifts and mercies. Sponsored by the Castlewood Ministerial Association. Fellowship time to follow.

## Adult & Sr. High Youth Bible Study

***"Love and Hate, Light and Darkness"***

**Continuing in our study of 1st, 2nd & 3rd John**




In this study we will seek to understand the themes and teachings from St. John's letters to the churches. This study will be offered at 9:30 am and also at 7:00 pm on Wednesdays as follows:

November 4 Fear

November 11 Faith

November 18 Prayer

December 2 Specifics of 2nd & 3rd John

## Sr. High/Adult Choir!

Practices on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays of each month at 8:30 am and will usually provide the anthem in worship on the 3rd Sunday.

Karen Lund has graciously agreed to directing our choir again...for which we give her thanks, and unto God be the glory! Not a *"professional"* choir, but for those who love to sing and wish to be a blessing to our worship life. Come and join us as we sing to God a new song!

**For your Calendars** – Sunday School Christmas Program will be on Sunday, December 13th. On that day, program practice will be at 9:00 and the program will be at 10:00.

# November 2026

| 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 | | | | | |

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**1st** **8:30 a.m. Choir**
**9:00 a.m. Worship Service—with Holy Communion**
**10:00 a.m. Fellowship**
**10:15 a.m. Bible Reception Class**
*12:30—1:30p.m. Blessing Center Open*



4th 7:00 a.m. "Wednesday in the Word" Youth Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study
6:00 p.m. Confirmation
7:00 p.m. Youth/Adult Bible Study

**8th** **8:30 a.m. Choir**
**9:00 a.m. Worship Service**
**10:00 a.m. Fellowship**
**10:15 a.m. Sunday School**
**10:15a.m. Church Council**




11th **VETERANS DAY**
9:30 a.m. Bible Study at ALC
6:00 p.m. Confirmation
7:00 p.m. Youth/Adult Bible Study at ALC

12th 9:00—2:00 ESD Pastor Meeting in Hayti

**15th** **8:30 a.m. Choir**
**9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion**
**10:00 a.m. Fellowship**
**10:15 a.m. Sunday School**
**11:00 a.m. 3 P's Youth Group**
*12:30—1:30p.m. Blessing Center Open*




18th 9:30 a.m. Bible Study at ALC
6:00 p.m. Confirmation
7:00 p.m. Youth/Adult Bible Study at ALC

**22nd** **9:00 a.m. Sunday School**
**10:00 a.m. Worship Service**
**11:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m. ALC Annual Community Thanksgiving Meal**

25th 7:00 p.m. Community Thanksgiving Eve Worship at Bemis-Holland

27th **THANKSGIVING DAY**

**29th** **9:00 a.m. Worship Service**
**10:00 a.m. Fellowship**
**10:15 a.m. No Sunday School(3 day weekend)**






## Attention American Lutheran Youth! *Wednesday in the Word!*

On Wednesday, November 4th we encourage our youth in grades 7-12 to invite their friends to join us from 7:00-8:10 for a breakfast at American Lutheran. There will be a full breakfast, a special devotional, guided meditation and prayers. Please bring a Bible and a friend! We will ensure that any Jr. High student who is dropped off to attend, will get a ride to the school!




## 3-Ps Youth Group.....




Sunday, November 15th, 11:00.

Right after Sunday School, we will have a 3-Ps Youth Group meeting for grades 7-12. Pizza, Planning and Prayer will be on the agenda! Please bring your thoughts for youth group events, summer trip etc!




## Confirmation Ministry – Grades 7-9

**Confirmation Classes** are on Wednesdays, November 4, 11, 18 at 6:00. **Please help:** if your son or daughter will not be in class for any reason, it is the parent's responsibility to contact Pastor Tom **in advance** to arrange for the make-up material. **Students:** BRING YOUR OWN BIBLE & WRITING UTENSIL!

November Acolytes:

1 Vivian Jankord
8 Reese Rawsthorne
15 Collyns Ruml
22 Veriti Smith
29 Mya Craig




November Snack Families:

4 Ruml Family
11 Craig Family
18 Vetter Family




No Sunday School on November 1st and 29th because of school 3 day weekends.

**Gideon Sunday – 15th of November:** on this day, we will have a representative from Gideons International with us in worship. Gideons, known by many as the "Bible People" are committed to placing God's Word in the hands of all people, so that they might read of the saving grace that is ours in Christ Jesus. Gideons and their Auxiliary are men and women dedicated to distributing God's Word and serve at their own expense, so that every dollar given in support of Gideons International goes to the printing of Bibles. The Temple Talk in worship will give us an update on their over 125-year ministry on behalf of Christian churches. An "Open Bible" offering will be received after worship in support of this vital ministry.

## CHURCH HAPPENINGS

*Graham Ryan son of Jacob and Lacy Severson, was baptized on Oct. 11th.*

*Vivan Grace, Joseph Rett, Everly Raine and Maycee Lynne, children of Tyler & Tess Jankord were baptized on Oct. 11th.*

*Blessings to all!*



# Minutes of ALC Church Council

**September 20, 2026**

**Call to order** - Joann

**Members Present:** Doug, Andy, Dan, Amanda, Jessi, Pastor, Joann

**Prayer** – Pastor

**Minutes approval from August 9, 2026**
Motion; Pastor Second; Jessi **MC**

**Financial Reports from August, 2026**
Motion; Amanda Second; Dan **MC**

**Pastor Report** 11 kids in Confirmation. A few adults attending Adult Wednesday am/pm Bible Study. 11 youth (10 from ALC) attended Wednesday in the Word Youth Breakfast – Hank R from Watertown FCA will be the speaker in October

**Communion Schedule: October 4, 2026 –** Amanda **October 18, 2026 -** Joann

## New Business

Pastor's Vacation Details: September 21-28
Pulpit Supply: Pastor Jerry Mekouris: $225.00 + 202 miles – **Doug will give Jerry access to the office**
Emergency Contact: Pastor Randy Eisenbeisz (Hayti) 605-520-5504

**Gideon Sunday:** Motion by Jessie, Second by Andy to approve inviting the Gideons to speak and receive an offering in October. Pastor will set the date for them to come. **MC**

**Thanksgiving Dinner – Newspaper announcement – Nov 22nd** : Andy and Sarah Smith will lead (council will discuss the possibility of delivering meals at the next meeting) No action required

**Mission Giving for Disaster Response for Nepal/India/Bangladesh:** Motion by Jessie and Second by Andy to give $1,500 in Mission Giving through Samaritan's Purse) **MC**

**Acknowledge Brenda McKee Almos:** Motion by Pastor Tom and Second by Amanda to purchase a $250 gift card to Hobby Lobby to acknowledge Brenda's years of leadership of Sunday School and Luther League. **MC**

Implications for Sunday School – **Vicki S and Heidi L are leading Sunday School – 3 yr to 6 grade**

Implications for Youth Group – **Pastor is asking youth parents to help with Wednesday and the Word morning breakfast.**

**Announced that Janell Bemis will be on medical leave in October.** Prior to her medical leave she will mock up the bulletins from what Pastor Tom has provided, then he will complete and run each bulletin in her absence.

**Purchase of Paper Folding Machine out of Thrivent Choice Dollars:** Motion by Jessie and Second by Doug to expend up to $2,000 for a mechanical folding machine for the office, using Thrivent Choice Dollars. Joann will check with Office Peeps and Amazon for best pricing. **MC**

**Next Meeting: October 18**

**Adjournment:** Motion by Andy, Second by Jessie. **MC**

**Prayer**

# American Lutheran Church Financial Report
## September 2026

**General Account**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Balance on hand 9-1-2026 | | | $ 31,889.53 |
| Receipts | | | |
| Offerings | $ 8,438.00 | | |
| Thrivent | $ - | $ 8,438.00 | |
| Disbursements | | | |
| Thomas Christenson (Pastor Salary) | $ 4,905.50 | | |
| Thomas Christenson (Social Security) | $ 310.34 | | |
| Thomas Christenson (Housing Equity) | $ 200.00 | | |
| Thomas Christenson (Mileage - 94 Miles) | $ 68.15 | | |
| Matrix Trust Co (Retirement Contribution) | $ 500.55 | | |
| EBSO NALC (Health Insurance) | $ 2,581.00 | | |
| TRISTAR Benefit (Ancillary Benefits) | $ 598.71 | | |
| Janell Bemis (Secretary - 24 hrs) | $ 354.62 | | |
| Dawn Mickey (Custodian - 15 hrs) | $ 214.71 | | |
| Roxanne Bass (Organist - 1 Svc) | $ 70.00 | | |
| Marsha Kurtenbach (Organist - 2 Svcs) | $ 140.00 | | |
| Karen Lund (Organist - 1 Svcs) | $ 70.00 | | |
| City of Castlewood (Ch: $71.00, Pars: $107.46) | $ 178.46 | | |
| ITC (Phone & Internet) | $ 123.97 | | |
| NorthWestern Energy (Ch: $12.74, Pars: $10.62) | $ 23.36 | | |
| Otter Tail Power (Ch: $176.04, Pars: $150.62) | $ 326.66 | | |
| North Star Mutual Insurance Company | $ 598.95 | | |
| NALC | $ 50.00 | | |
| Office Peeps (office supplies & copier) | $ 119.69 | | |
| Concordia Publishing (bulletin inserts) | $ 117.50 | | |
| Upper Room Ministries (booklets) | $ 55.33 | | |
| Pastor Tom Christenson (worship supplies) | $ 37.16 | | |
| Jerry Mekrouris (pulpit supply) | $ 371.45 | | |
| CCLI (copyright license) | $ 266.00 | | |
| Watertown Wholesale (cleaning supplies) | $ 86.00 | | |
| US Treasury (3rd quarter taxes) | $ 275.63 | $ (12,643.74) | |
| **Balance on hand 9-30-2026** | | | **$ 27,683.79** |

*** Thrivent Choice Balance $ 3,517.49

**Building Account**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Balance on hand 9-1-2026 | | | $ 24,463.06 |
| Receipts | | | |
| Offerings for Building Fund | $ 30.00 | $ 30.00 | |
| Disbursements | | | |
| | $ - | $ - | |
| **Balance on hand 9-30-2026** | | | **$ 24,493.06** |

**Mission Account**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Balance on hand 9-1-2026 | | | $ 5,195.87 |
| Receipts | | | |
| Offerings for Mission Fund | $ 385.00 | | |
| Children's Offering | $ 54.00 | | |
| Offerings for Blessing Center | $ 100.00 | $ 539.00 | |
| Disbursements | | | |
| Castlewood Blessing Center | $ 100.00 | | |
| Global Health Ministries (childrens offerings July Aug Sept) | $ 127.75 | | |
| Samaritan's Purse (flooding in Nepal) | $ 1,500.00 | $ (1,727.75) | |
| **Balance on hand 9-30-2026** | | | **$ 4,007.12** |

**Memorial Account**

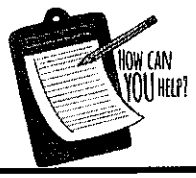
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Balance on hand 9-1-2026 | | | $ 4,369.36 |
| Receipts | $ - | $ - | |
| Disbursements | $ - | $ - | |
| **Balance on hand 9-30-2026** | | | **$ 4,369.36** |

**Account Summary**

| | Current Balance | Change September 2026 | Change Year to Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| **General Account** | **$ 27,683.79** | $ (4,205.74) | $ (9,895.37) |
| **Building Account** | **$ 24,493.06** | $ 30.00 | $ (4,041.59) |
| **Mission Account** | **$ 4,007.12** | $ (1,188.75) | $ 77.00 |
| **Memorial Account** | **$ 4,369.36** | $ - | $ - |

## The Servants of our Lord

| | Organists | Ushers | Audio-Visual Technician |
|---|---|---|---|
| November 1 | Roxanne Bass | Lynn & Kristy Borer | Chuck Juntti |
| November 8 | Marsha Kurtenbach | Charlie & Jenn Carter Family | Chuck Juntti |
| November 15 | Roxanne Bass | Landon & Lindsay Vetter Family | Doug Strait |
| November 22 | Marsha Kurtenbach | Richard & Neda Ries | Rod Fischer |
| November 29 | Karen Lund | Craig & Roxanne Bass | |




**SIGN -UP SHEETS**

**Lectors— (Scriptures sheets available)**

**&**

**Fellowship Servers**

**IN THE NARTHEX**

## ALTAR GUILD

November: Angie Larson & Amanda Pribbenow

*December: Joann Fischer & Lorie Mack*

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

**Remember there is CALENDAR on our Website!** Go to: americanlutheranchurch.com and you can see the calendar of events for American Lutheran. If you have anything church related to add to the calendar, please contact Pastor Tom at pastortlc@gmail.com

## Our Faithfulness in Giving

| | General | Building | Mission | *Children | *Blessing Ctr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **September 27** | $1,186.00 | | $20.00 | $20.00 | |
| **October 4** | $3,560.00 | $5.00 | $198.00 | $18.00 | |
| **October 11** | $2,034.00 | | $118.00 | $43.00 | $75.00 |
| **October 18** | $1,838.00 | $5.00 | $35.00 | $35.00 | |
| **October 25** | $ 828.00 | | $9.00 | $9.00 | |

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

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

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Haley Strait Gallman | 11-01 | Claire Severson | 11-09 |
| Clara Kenyon | 11-02 | Adrienne January | 11-12 |
| John E. Bucher | 11-02 | Jacob Severson | 11-12 |
| Janet Christenson | 11-07 | Mya Rae Craig | 11-15 |
| Paul Christenson | 11-08 | Colt Pewe | 11-17 |
| Kellyn Jackson | 11-08 | Barbara Stevens | 11-19 |
| Ava Ruml | 11-08 | Roxanne Bass | 11-24 |
| Chuck Juntti | 11-09 | Pat Dockter | 11-24 |
| | | Bostyn Ruml | 11-27 |
| | | Noah Wiersma | 11-27 |
| | | Ryder Mack | 11-09 |
| | | Kailyn Larson | 11-13 |
| Kim Stevens | 11-01 | Dawn Mickey | 11-20 |
| Geri Gantvoort | 11-03 | Calonna Craig | 11-22 |
| Cheyann Kenyon | 11-08 | Wyatt Mack | 11-27 |
| Janell Bemis | 11-09 | Jessica Ruml | 11-27 |
| Patricia Dockter | 11-09 | Drew Ruml | 11-28 |

## Anniversaries of the Month

Nov. 23 Ted & Cheryl Sutton

Nov. 25 Tess & Tyler Jankord

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**

**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