

The Epistle November 2026

A publication of St. James Lutheran Church,
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Message from the Vicar

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you!

It was a joy to celebrate the Feast of All Saints with you yesterday. I'd like to put the Beatitudes squarely in view one more time before our minds move on to Advent.

> Matthew 5:1-12
> 1 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 And he began to speak and taught them, saying:
> 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
> 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
> 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
> 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
> 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
> 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
> 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
> 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
> 11 "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

You may notice that the structure of this list is uniform - each statement begins the same way and ends in a similar spot. It's poetic in that way, <u>but the content of the list doesn't follow a predictable formula</u>. Some in this list

are outward actions; others are internal experiences. Some are things you can control; others are things outside of your control. Some are things you could pursue; others are things that pursue you.

They also don't present as an obvious list of virtues. The list doesn't seem to be comprehensive. They don't stick to a uniform script as some other lists in Holy Scripture do. They don't serve well as goals or ambitions. For example, it doesn't work very well to make a goal out of mourning!

Notice what Jesus called blessed. It's not what the world may call blessed - not through wealth, biggering, and status. No, but in poverty of spirit, humility, and purity of heart.

So what is this list? My best take after a couple decades of consideration is this: They are markers of the blessed soul from the Master himself. It's a condition of the soul. Jesus - the blessed one - knows what blessedness is and as he looks at the people gathered on that holy mountain - he begins to point out what he sees in them that is good, and holy, and true.

These markers of the blessed soul do not guarantee happiness or success. This blessedness goes deeper. Blessedness is more along the lines of **contentment and assurance** anchored in a quiet resolve to see the world the way God sees the world and committed to the goodness of God in the midst of the circumstances of one's life.

In the middle of the cares and concerns of the people, Jesus sees the seeds of what will grow into the kingdom of God. And he calls *that* blessed.

I encourage you in these confusing times: continue to be faithful to what we know to be good: mercy, meekness, poverty of spirit, and purity of heart. Know this list so well that you recognize it when you see it. May these markers guide us to sainthood. AMEN.

God's peace to you in these days as we look ahead toward Thanksgiving and Advent.

Vicar Bryce Hewlett, SAM

FALL STEWARDSHIP 2026

Dear St. James:

We have made sizable updates to our church facilities over the last five years. When a need was identified, the call was put out for financial support, and you generously responded. Whether it was HVAC replacement, foundation repair, or other smaller projects - you rose and met the need. These updates provide a foundation from which we will grow in the future.

The Congregational Council, Property Committee, and I have turned our attention to the next layer of needful improvements that will come in the next five years. This list includes substantial projects - replacing our roof, upgrading our parking lot, and making additional interior updates, as needed. The estimated total for these projects could exceed $150,000.

We consider it wise and prudent to conduct a Capital Campaign during our 2026 Fall Stewardship Season to meet this new challenge.

Please note: The Capital Campaign will be a focus for us during the Fall Steward Season, but it will not replace our annual *Estimate of Giving* card and a *Serving St. James Form*. Please return these two items to the church ASAP. Click below for virtual versions of these forms.

Click here for the Serving at St. James Form.
Click here for the Estimate of Giving Form.

Thank you, in advance, for your faithfulness and dedication to the life of our church.

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.



Vicar Bryce Hewlett, SAM

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy November, St. James!

As the autumn leaves settle and the days grow visibly shorter, November invites us into a natural season of transition. There is a unique stillness to this month. The frantic energy of early autumn has passed, and the winter holidays are just around the horizon. It is a time when we are naturally drawn indoors, seeking warmth, comfort, and connection.

In the rhythm of our faith and community life, November serves as a vital bridge. It is a season anchored by remembrance and gratitude. We begin the month honoring the legacy of those who walked before us, and we conclude it gathered around tables of thanksgiving. It reminds us that even as the world outside turns colder and darker, the light we carry within our community only burns brighter when shared.

In a culture that often rushes from one big event to the next, November asks us to slow down and practice intentional gratitude. We have had a whirlwind of a Stewardship season, with everyone pledging to our Capital Campaign. The Congregational Council and the Property Committee cannot thank you all enough for helping out our community. We can take this time to be thankful for what we have, and what is being prepared to come.

Thankfulness is more than a feeling; it is a spiritual discipline. It is the act of looking at our lives—with all their joys, struggles, and imperfections—and recognizing the steady thread of grace running through them. As we prepare for the busy weeks of December, let us use this month to rest, reflect, and realign our hearts. Let us check in on neighbors who might find the changing seasons difficult, and let us continue to be a sanctuary of warmth for all who walk through our doors.

Thank you for the unique light you bring to our community. May your November be filled with

moments of deep peace, gentle rest, and a profound sense of thanksgiving.

Be good. Do good. God bless,

Madeline Schmidt

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE

Worship & Music 2026

Advent Readers

The Advent Readings Sign-Up sheet is in the Narthex - there are 4 Sundays in Advent so make sure to sign up if you'd like to be a Reader!



Christmas Poinsettias

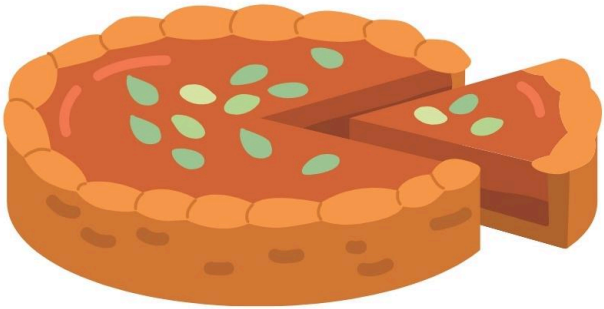
We will be ordering poinsettias to decorate the church for our Christmas Services.
Cost: $21.00 each.

Order forms are in the bulletins or you can call the church office to place your order at (563) 355-4161.

Orders must be placed by November 30th.

JOIN US FOR

Pie Fest & Our Thanksgiving Service



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH

PIE AT 6:00PM

THANKSGIVING SERVICE AT 7PM

SIGN UP SHEET IN THE NARTHEX!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PIE FEST CONTACT SHIRLEY RICHLEN AT (563) 949-6545

NOVEMBER WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE

Date	Assisting Minister	Reader	Acolyte	Usher	Usher
All Saints 11/1/26	Justina Pessein	Kaylee Pessein	Dex Hewlett	Ryan Martin	Ellen Hogbin
11/8/26	Judie Brooks	Todd Harper	Eli Pessein	Melissa Forari	Ana Forari
11/15/26	Pat Larson	Amanda S.	Edi S.	Jerry Nichols	Yvonne Nichols
Christ the King 11/22/26	Shirley Richlen	Judie Brooks	Jude Hewlett	Fritz Voss	Judy Larson
Thanksgiving 11/24/26	Tom Sladky	No Reader		Ron Mekalson	
11/29/26	Justina Pessein	Kaylee Pessein	Velvet C.	Jerry Nichols	Yvonne Nichols

ALTAR GUILD:

Nov 1 ALL SAINTS — Marilyn Pieart, Diana Worley & Shirley Richlen (**candles**) - **Feast Day**

Nov 7 — Ellen Hogbin & Audrey Lovell

Nov 14 — Ellen Hogbin & Audrey Lovell

Nov 22 CHRIST THE KING — Pat Larson - **Feast Day**

Nov 24 THANKSGIVING — Pat Larson

Nov 28 ADVENT — Marilyn & Diana Worley



Proverbs 27:17

Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9AM Worship *All Saints Day* 12PM Confirmation at Zion Lutheran *Daylight Savings*	4PM Social Ministry Mtg.		10AM 4th Quarter Study 6PM Choir Practice 6-8PM Food Pantry	9-11AM Food Pantry		5PM Worship
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9AM Worship 10AM Coffee & Convo.		4PM Property Mtg.	8AM Worship & Music Mtg. 10AM 4th Quarter Study 4:30PM Confirmation 6-8PM Food Pantry *Veterans Day*	9-11AM Food Pantry 9:30AM Finance Mtg. 11AM Service at BHCC		5PM Worship
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9AM Worship 10AM Council Mtg.		1PM Sarah Circle	6-8PM Food Pantry 6PM Choir Practice	9-11AM Food Pantry 11:30AM GANG		No 5PM Worship due to Christ the King
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9AM Worship 11AM Dixon *Christ the King Sunday*		6PM Pie Fest 7PM Service *No Quilting*	6-8PM Food Pantry	Food Pantry Closed *Office Closed Thanksgiving*		5PM Worship

WELCA NEWS

SARAH CIRCLE

November Sarah Circle will meet on Tuesday the 17th at 1:00 pm in the Lower Level. Shirley is the hostess and Ellen is the lesson leader.

St James GANG

The St James GANG will meet in Fellowship Hall at 11:30AM, Nov. 19th. Bring your own lunch, dessert and beverages are provided.

Our speaker that day will be a member of Humble Dwellings. We have heard from their group before, but their needs are still great. We need to hear it again.

See you all there, and bring a friend. All are welcome!

From the Quilt Block

November 2026

Our 54 personal care kits, and 14 quilts plus were delivered to the ingathering in Cedar Rapids on October 17th.

We also delivered 1 Queen, 3 twins, 4 lap robe sizes, and 4 baby blankets to Lutheran Services in Iowa. All of this is due to your support. Thank you. You also helped me to choose the quilts for the quilt raffle after Thanksgiving.

Our next quilt day would be Tuesday, November 26th but that is also the day of the Pie Fest and St. James Thanksgiving service. I am sure that our quilters will want to bake pie rather than make quilts. All of you pie lovers, we also need pie eaters as well as pie donations. So come for dessert and stay for Thanksgiving service.

Our October quilt day had 5 people attend and we finished 3 quilts Our annual drawing for quilts will start November 29th, with the drawing on Sunday, December 22. This year we have 7 quilts for you to consider. Please remember that your donations are for quilt batting and LWR projects. Tickets are still $1.00 a ticket or 6 for $5.00 and will be available from December 1 st through December 20th, the day of the drawing. If you would rather just donate to the quilters, we are glad for your donations. Our quilts are great gifts for family and friends, if not for yourselves

The quilters need cotton fabric to make quilts. If you know of anyone who has fabric “sitting” around, encourage a donation also if you see a good deal on fabric at a garage sale, estate sale or store, please let one of our quilters know so we can take advantage of that opportunity to continue our mission.

Thank you again for all your support.

Pieces be with you,
Shirley Richlen



SOCIAL MINISTRY NEWS

The last Zion meal was September 28th at 5:30 p.m. Currently we are looking for people to help with serving the Zion meals! It takes less than an hour. It is very fulfilling and they are so grateful for whatever we serve! If you would like to volunteer, please contact Judy Larson at 563-340-7902!

The next meeting is November 2nd at 4:00 p.m. in the conference room.

Bingo is November 19th at the Bettendorf Health Care Center. The residents win prizes such as small stuffed animals (Beanie Baby size), and quarters. We enjoy calling the numbers for them and they are always happy to see us!

Please consider joining us.. new ideas are always welcome!
Judy Larson (563) 340-7902!

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

11/7 EMILY HICKS

11/7 LAVONNE MIENKE

11/15 GLENN BOYLES

11/16 EVERETT MANTHE

11/18 SHIRLEY RICHLEN

11/19 JAY BROOKS

11/23 YVONNE NICHOLS

11/27 HEATHER MALLI

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

11/14 TERRY & JIM MARTENS

11/20 JERRY & YVONNE NICHOLS

11/22 KATHY & ZACH MELBY

Directory Address Updates

Anderson, Janene
3012 Holiday Ct.
Bettendorf, IA. 52722
Cell: 563/370-8710
jands356@msn.com

Berberich, Russell
3024 Holiday Ct.
Bettendorf, IA. 52722
563/210-5175
russellb914@yahoo.com

Meinke, Lavonne
Bettendorf Health Care Center
2730 Crow Creek Road - Room 33
Bettendorf, IA. 52722
563/355-1900

Meumann, Mary
Storypoint
3150 Glenbrook Circle S., Apt 209
Bettendorf, IA. 52722
563-343-3974 - Cell
(563) 900-3078 - Temporary number (8/24/2026)

Willey, Linda
1104 Kimberly Road
Bettendorf, IA. 52722
314/852-1475
angelwingl@netscape.net

Prayers for Healing and Support

Congregational Members

Ed Arp, **Bev** Chappen, **Sandy** Henry,
Frieda Houldsworth, **Jeryl** Krumbholz,
LaVonne Mienke, **Shirley** Niewald, **Kaylee** Pessein

Family and Friends

Amanda (friend of Melissa), **Annette & Rick** (Steve & Sue Miller & Pat Sorenson's sister & brother-in-law), **Brenda** (Friend of Janene Anderson), **Carol** (friend of Joleen Bakken), **Darryl** (friend of Deb Crooks), **Donna** (Ed Arp's sister), **Drew** (Pat Larson's friend), **Elliot** (Gary and Eunice Grell's great grandson), **Emmett** (friend of Diana Worley), **Hattie** (Frieda's sister), **Jack** (family of Martens/Schmidts), **Jane** (friend of Deb Crooks),
Jason (Sherry Germanio's son), **Jim** (Pat Larson's nephew), **John** (Pat Larson's brother), **John** (Frieda's nephew), **Karen** (Shirley's Aunt), **Larry** (family of Doug Larson), **Mark** (friend of Jason Forari),
Pat (Judy Larson's Sister-in-Law), **Phil** (Steve Miller and Pat Sorensen's brother), **Stacy** (Fritz' son's cousin), **Steve** (friend of Sue Miller),
Wally (Frieda's nephew)

Those Whose Duty it is to Protect Others

Anthony Karasek (Judy Larson's great nephew)
LCDR Chris Tribble USN (Erik & Joleen Bakken's friend).
CPT Eli Smith (Jerry and Myrna Mattly's grandson)
Nathan Pearson USAF (Jenna & Kane Schmidt's friend)
Tyler McLaughlin, First Responder (Family of Pat Larson)

If you need to add or remove someone from the prayer list, please contact the church office.