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What's coming up?

August 2026

- **Vacation Bible School** will be **August 3rd – 7th** from 6:00pm-8:00pm at Holy Cross. The theme is Rainforest Falls. Registration forms are on the Welcome Table in the narthex. Registration can also be done on our website <https://www.holycrosslutherandecatur.org/pages/vbs-registration-form>. One form per child. Please see Vicar Chris if you would like to volunteer and see how you can help! DINNER PROVIDED.
- **August 8th** Christian music trio CAIN comes to the Devon Lakeshore Amphitheater. Come join your Holy Cross sisters and brothers as we listen to good, joyful music in the beautiful outdoors. Show starts at 7pm. We will be sitting in the terrace section. Tickets in that section will be \$49 and are available on the Devon website. See Vicar Chris with any questions.
- **August 9th** Blessing of the backpacks will be done during the Children's Message. Please bring your child's backpack with you to the service so that Vicar Chris can give the blessing.
- **August 9th** Mutual Ministry Meeting 10:30
- **August 12th** 5:30pm Executive Meeting, 6:00pm Finance Meeting, 7:00pm Property Meeting
- **August 19th** 6:00pm Council Meeting
- The **WELCA Rummage Sale** will take place at Holy Cross **August 27th 9am-4pm & 28th 9am-noon**. Donations can be dropped off at Holy Cross August 24th-26th.
- **August 30th** will be a Joint Worship Service at FELC. There will also be a "God's Work our Hands." Service project scheduled.

- **September 13th** is FELC's installation of Pastor Sarah Cordray. Bishop Greg Busboom will join at FELC and Holy Cross is invited to join in with the celebration.
- **September 19th** is the WELCA Fall Gathering held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Decatur. Last year the event was in Champaign and we had 90 women attend; several from FELC and HC attended. With the event being held in Decatur, we hope to see more FELC & HC attendees. The WELCA group will send out additional information this summer.
- **Save the Date – October 4th – Synod Day.** Join us at Grace Lutheran Church in Champaign at 1:30pm as our conference gathers for Synod Day! There will be an Oktoberfest theme/food, thought provoking breakout sessions and fun games. Bishop Greg and Staff will be attending (including a familiar former HC face).
- **October 30th** "Trunk 'r Treat event at Holy Cross. This will be a joint event with FELC and Holy Cross.



August 1st - Bob & Donna Svencner

August 6th - Mark & Joyce Jennings

August 7th - Jeffery & Emily Buhnerkempe

August 12th - Kay & Greg Warren

August 18th - Jim & Pam Musser



There was no June 2026 meeting because a quorum was not available.

Members Present: Vicar Chris Edmonds, Cora Hughes, Sara Corrigan, Kathy Carter, Donna Svencner, Kay Wolken, and Kay Davis Warren.

Absent: Roxie Danyus, **Trisha Blazier, Alyson Weger**

Vicar Chris led us in Dwelling in the Word with a discussion about Psalm 8

Pastor's Report: Vicar Chris presented reports for April, including Home Visits and Communion, Pastoral Care visits and meetings.

Minutes: It was moved by Kay and seconded by Donna that the minutes of the April meeting be approved as disseminated. MP

Kay Wolken shared the Treasurer's Reports, noting that this was a month with a small negative balance.

Total Income:	\$ 5801.50
Total Expenses	<u>5985.50</u>
Difference	\$ -184.00

It was moved by Kathy and seconded by Cora that the Treasurer's Reports be accepted. MP

Committee Reports

Finance: Kay Wolken reported that the Committee did not meet. Kay reported that she will be having surgery on July 20 and return to work on September 15. The committee completed the semiannual audit and all accounts were found to be correct.

Generosity: Cora continues to remind us to send notes of generosity to her or to Sara for use in the bulletin.

Property: Sara reported that Ted is looking for bids on parking lot patching and sealing. The Cub Cadet mower is not working; repairs are being sought. We need to get a group to work on the east end fence line. It is badly overgrown. The council is recommending the purchase of a self-propelled mower. They will check on Memorial money.

Outreach: Kathy reported that the dates are set for the Noisy Offerings. We are still collecting laundry pods and Toilet Paper for AMELCA. Thanks again to Deb Weger for delivering our donations. The Service Project at our joint service on the 12th filled 100 summer help bags and they were delivered to Dove and they were very appreciative. \$237 from the joint service went to AMELCA.

Worship & Music: Sara reported that planning is done through the end of August. She continues to work with organists..

WELCA: The Rummage Sale Will be held August 27-28. Donation drop off will be 8/24-26 from 9am to pm. The District WELCA Board toured the church and thought it would be perfect for the Fall Gathering on September 19. They offered to purchase school and health kits as their donation for the use of the building. Claire will be in charge of food with our help. Holy Cross will provide a continental breakfast. Prairie Farms will donate various products.

BSA: Sara reported a need to have a talk with Mark and Melinda regarding storage concerns. Vicar Chris will check with Ted, and report back.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Cora requested the use of the Fellowship Hall on 10/10 for a baby shower. Kay Davis Warren moved to allow, Kathy seconded. MP

Oct 4 will be our Synod Day in Champaign. Holy Cross will pay the \$10 fee for anyone wanting to attend. Let Kay Wolken know and she will sign us up. Sara moved and Kathy seconded that HC pay the registration fee. MP

It was moved by Kay Davis Warren and seconded by Cora that we allow Vicar Chris to have August 2nd off. MP

It was moved by Kay Wolken and seconded by Donna that we adjourn.MP

We adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted, Kay Davis Warren

Secretary



Central/Southern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Synod Days: East Central Conference
Sunday, October 4, 2026 2:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Champaign, Grace Lutheran Church

313 S Prospect Ave
Champaign, IL 61820-4779

For the work of ministry: Living out our baptismal calling to ...

- **live among God's faithful people**
- **hear the Word of God and share in the Lord's supper**
- **proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed**
- **serve all people, following the example of Jesus**
- **strive for justice and peace in all the earth**

A day of worship, learning, fellowship, and relationship-building for all generations in each of the six conferences of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod.

Each synod day includes:

- **Cross-generational worship**
- **Activities for children and families**
- **Shared meal**
- **State of the Synod video**
- **Q&A with synod staff**
- **Mission moments from each conference**
- **Four "Spirit Labs" workshop options (each person may choose two)**
 - **The Foolishness of Trying to Save Your Church: Letting Go So We Can Go! led by Bishop Greg Busboom**
 - **Jesus Journeys and Faithful Field Trips, led by Deacon Jason Fisher, Director for Evangelical Mission**
 - **Body Building with Love: Tools for Adaptability, led by Pastor Kristen Schmid, Assistant to the Bishop for Transformational Communities**
 - **Here I Am, Send Me! A Vocational Workshop, led by Pastor Amy Zietlow, Assistant to the Bishop for Transformational Leadership**

July 17, 2026
Living Faithfully

“We’re Listening”

Nebraska congregation gives community a visible invitation to prayer

Editor’s note: This article is an excerpt from the e-newsletter “Stories from Your Nebraska Synod.” Used by permission from the synod, Tic Tac Toe Marketing and Erick Hill.

On a Monday morning not long after a small wooden structure appeared along the sidewalk at [Messiah Lutheran Church](#) in Ralston, Neb., Erick Hill stepped outside to see if anyone in the neighborhood had noticed. Inside the prayer box, the pastor found a handwritten card from an aunt, asking the congregation to pray for her niece who was struggling in a broken home. She carefully wrote out the situation, entrusted the card to the little box and walked away, trusting that someone would actually pray.

Members did what they promised. They lifted that child and her family in their intercessory prayers during worship the next Sunday.

A few days later, Hill checked the box again. Another card. This time, it was a thank you from the aunt: “You really did what you said you were going to do.” She had watched worship online, heard the prayer spoken aloud, and needed the congregation to know how much that faithfulness mattered.

“For me, that’s why we do what we do,” Hill said. “People are putting their trust, their faith in us to follow through. In a world where churches aren’t always as trustworthy as they should be, they need every little bit of evidence that they can be.”

The prayer box began with a conversation in the men’s group. “We take on Bible studies, book studies, all sorts of things,” said Neil Smith, a lay leader. “One Sunday we were talking about rituals of the church, especially confession.”

One group member, who had grown up Catholic, shared how much he missed the active, embodied practice of confession. That led to a bigger conversation about what it means to bring our burdens before God—not just silently but in community.

“In the middle of all that, Stan, who usually sits and listens, spoke up,” Smith recalled. “He said, ‘We should put that out in the parking lot where [community] members can participate.’”

The prayer box “invites us into a different kind of conversation with our neighbor.”

Smith heard that comment as more than just a nice idea. A home builder by trade, he began looking up designs and sketching out possibilities. Over the next several weeks and months, a handful of men gathered to build. Some showed up with tools and time; others contributed cash or materials.

What emerged was more than a little wooden box. It's a visible, physical invitation for the neighborhood to bring their prayers to God—and to know that the people of Messiah will carry those prayers together.

The box sits adjacent to the sidewalk at the edge of Messiah's parking lot—close enough to the church to feel connected but clearly meant for the community.

“We wanted it to be more than just a slot in a wall,” Smith said. They made it big enough to feel like a small “outpost” of the church. They painted Scripture passages on the outside—verses that members said were important to their prayer life. They added the word “prayer” in multiple languages to reflect the neighborhood's diversity.

The box also includes a clear invitation to leave prayer requests; a promise that these prayers will be lifted up every Sunday in worship; and a QR code linking to Messiah's website.

“It's us putting our footprint beyond just the walls of the church,” Hill said. “People may drive by and never walk inside. But the box says: we're here, and we're listening.”

“Prayer is foundational”

For Hill, the prayer box is not a one-off project. It's part of a much larger reimagining of what it means to be church in this time.

“We're getting ready to celebrate our 70th anniversary,” he said. “If we're going to be around for the next 70 years, it's going to depend on how well we integrate ourselves into the community—our neighbors, small businesses, nonprofits, schools.”

Like many congregations, Messiah has wrestled with declining numbers and the temptation to simply “keep the programs going” and hope people show up. “I keep telling the congregation: the people you want to minister to are here,” Hill said. “They're just not necessarily in the Sunday school rooms. They're in your neighborhood. They're down the street. They're in the schools.”

The prayer box, he added, “invites us into a different kind of conversation with our neighbor.”

It also keeps prayer at the center of everything else. “How can we expect our congregation to start a grocery store, launch a laundromat or create affordable housing if we don't truly understand the magnitude of the God we worship?” Hill asked. “Prayer is foundational. It's how we remember that all things are possible through Christ, and that we're not doing this work alone.”

“I hope the box becomes a beacon not just for the community but for our congregation. A reminder that we can step out into the community in simple, faithful ways. It doesn't always have to be some huge event.

For Smith, the prayer box is as much about obedience as it is about outreach. “I think that’s where I’m at in my faith journey right now—making sure that as God drops something in, we respond, not just by saying, ‘Oh, that was interesting,’ and then moving on,” he said.

The project wasn’t quick or smooth. There were moments when the partially built structure sat untouched. Weeks when the painting didn’t get done. Times when it could easily have been abandoned.

“That’s how I know it came from God,” Smith said. “Because as it hit those valleys, God kept putting it on our hearts, and we kept stepping forward. We don’t have to do everything. God does the heavy lifting. We just get to be his hands and feet at particular points in time.”

For now, the responses in the box have been “positive but slow.” A few cards. A few stories. A beginning. Hill planned to spend an afternoon outside by the box in the spring, inviting passersby into prayer and conversation. “Even if I just pray with one person, that counts,” he said.

And he is already thinking about a “phase two”—smaller versions families could take home and place in their neighborhoods, or even mobile prayer boxes that go to community events.

“I hope the box becomes a beacon not just for the community but for our congregation,” Smith said. “A reminder that we can step out into the community in simple, faithful ways. It doesn’t always have to be some huge event. Whatever God calls you to do, you listen, you respond, you take action. And then you let God multiply it.”



Courtesy of
Messiah Lutheran
— Scripture
passages that have
meaning for
members were
painted on the
prayer box at
Messiah Lutheran
Church in Ralston,
Neb. The box also
includes the word
“prayer” in multiple
languages to reflect
the community’s
diversity.

TEACHING PRAYER

Faith & family: Growing together (August 2020)



Focal verse

“Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6).

Reflection

Encouraging our kids to pray seems like one of our easier tasks as parents, yet often I feel as if I’m stumbling in my efforts to do so. Prayer has been a way for me to

connect with God and others, and I desire this same connection for my children.

I want my children to know the beauty and power found in lifting our bodies, words and songs to God, but many times the daily realities of our lives push [prayer](#) to the back burner.

Over time I’ve learned that everything, from the rhythm of our days to the people we meet and the state of the world, are experiences we can use to offer prayers. When we hear a police siren, we can ask God to watch over those in need. If our patience seems to be fraying, we can ask God to still our hearts. If our child is sad, we can pray that they feel God’s presence. Small moments throughout the day give us the opportunity to speak to God.

Not long ago my daughter started coloring in my devotional adult coloring book. She chose the picture of a deer drinking water. Day by day she carefully filled in the legs and flowers.

“Color with me, Mama,” she recently implored, handing me a purple colored pencil.

“What a beautiful color,” I said. “Thank you, God, for purple, and deer, and all of God’s creation. How else can we thank God?”

“For sun!” Charlotte shouted.

“Yes,” I replied. “We say, ‘Thank you, God, for sun.’”

Above the deer we were coloring I noticed the words of Psalm 25 (NIV): “In you, Lord my God, I put my trust.” The words and the beautiful scroll of the letters drew me in as we worked together.

“In you, Lord my God, I put my trust,” I said, reciting the verse aloud for my daughter. I let the words become our prayer.

Practices

Pick a verse as a family, perhaps a short one like “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). Then write it out together. Display your creations on the refrigerator or above your mantle as a reminder of God’s word always speaking to us.

Find a coloring book of bible verses to color together, or use the book [Praying in Color, Kids Edition](#), to dig deeper into scripture and creatively engage in God’s Word.

Store your favorite books of prayers, poems and/or Bible stories near the dining table. During meals, reach over and grab one to share with your family.

Prayers

We pray for school administrators, teachers, staff and students who are preparing for a new year of learning.

We pray for those with heavy hearts and anxious minds.

We pray for meaningful conversations and the ability to listen.

We give thanks for state parks, walking trails, lakes and conservation areas that point to the beauty of God’s creation.

We give thanks for scripture and reading Bible stories together.

We give thanks for the experiences of summer: campfires, fireflies, playing catch and splashing in sprinklers.

Lord in your mercy,
Hear our prayers.

Service opportunity

Connect with the staff of a local service agency (animal shelter, food pantry, shelter for those who are homeless, etc.) and ask them how you can pray for the ones their agency serves. Collect prayer requests and incorporate them into family prayers. After a few weeks of praying the written prayers, listen for how God is calling you to action.

Vision Statement

Centered in Christ's grace we find strength through the Holy Spirit to share the journey of life our Father has given us.



Blessing of the backpacks will take place during the Children's Message on August 9th. Please bring your child's backpack with you to the service so that Vicar Chris can give the blessing.



A prayer for August

God,

As August begins, help me to walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). Help me to be transformed by the renewal of my mind, that by testing I may discern what is Your good and perfect will (Romans 12:2).

Help me to not be anxious about anything but to bring everything before You in prayer with thanksgiving, and may Your peace that surpasses all understanding guard my heart in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).

And Lord, the joy of You is my strength (Nehemiah 8:10). Rejoicing in You is my delight! Every day of my life I want to cherish the joy of knowing You. I love You. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

@sincerelybykara

Back-to-School Prayer **for Teachers & Staff**



Heavenly Father,

We lift up every teacher, principal, and school staff member into Your hands today.

Grant them strength, wisdom, and patience as they guide and care for the students You place in their classrooms and hallways. Fill their hearts with compassion, their minds with clarity, and their spirits with joy. May they be examples of kindness and encouragement, shining Your light through their words and actions. Lord, bless their hard work and remind them that their efforts are making an eternal difference.

In Jesus' Name, Amen. 

God's Spoken Word Ministries

Vacation Bible School



August 3rd – 7th

6:00pm – 8:00pm

@ Holy Cross

Registration forms are on the Welcome Table in the narthex. Registration can also be done on our website

<https://www.holycrosslutherandecatur.org/pages/vbs-registration-form>.

One form per child.

DINNER PROVIDED

Day 1

God is our creator.

“Praise the Lord, everything he has created, everything in all his kingdom.”

(Psalm 103:22)

Day 2

God knows everything.

“O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me.”

(Psalm 139:1)

Day 3

God is our safe place.

“Then I pray to you, O Lord I say, ‘You are my place of refuge.’”

(Psalm 142:5)

Day 4

God is love.

“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.”

(Psalm 136:1)

Day 5

God is forever.

“But we can praise the lord both now and forever! Praise the Lord!”

(Psalm 115:18)

August Lectionary Readings

August 2

[Isaiah 55:1-5](#) Eat and drink that which truly satisfies

[Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21](#) You open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps. 145:16)

[Romans 9:1-5](#) The glory of God's people Israel

[Matthew 14:13-21](#) Christ feeding five thousand

August 9

[1 Kings 19:9-18](#) The Lord speaks to Elijah on Mount Horeb

[Psalm 85:8-13](#) I will listen to what the Lord God is saying. (Ps. 85:8)

[Romans 10:5-15](#) Hearing and confessing the word of faith

[Matthew 14:22-33](#) Jesus walking on the sea

August 16

[Isaiah 56:1, 6-8](#) A house of prayer for all peoples

[Psalm 67](#) Let all the peoples praise you, O God. (Ps. 67:3)

[Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32](#) God's mercy to all, Jew and Gentile

[Matthew 15:\[10-20\] 21-28](#) The healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter



August 23

[Isaiah 51:1-6](#) *The enduring foundation of God's salvation*

[Psalm 138](#) O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever. (Ps. 138:8)

[Romans 12:1-8](#) *One body in Christ, with gifts that differ*

[Matthew 16:13-20](#) *The profession of Peter's faith*

August 30

[Jeremiah 15:15-21](#) *God fortifies the prophet against opposition*

[Psalm 26:1-8](#) Your love is before my eyes; I have walked faithfully with you. (Ps. 26:3)

[Romans 12:9-21](#) *Live in harmony*

[Matthew 16:21-28](#) *The passion prediction and rebuke to Peter*



PAINT & ELECTRONIC RECYCLING 2026

NOW ACCEPTING MICROWAVES

*****BEGINNING THURSDAY, APRIL 2nd*****



April thru September

Tuesdays: 8 a.m. until 12 p.m.

Thursdays: 12 p.m. until 4 p.m.

1 Saturday Each Month 8 a.m. until 12 p.m.



This year we have decided to offer ONE Saturday in the months of October, November, and December. The dates for these collections are listed below.

Microwaves: Counter Top, Over-the-range, built-in, & convection microwaves will be accepted on any collection day. **UP TO 7 MICROWAVES WILL BE ACCEPTED AT THE COST OF \$5.00 EACH.**

Electronics: Unwanted TV's and select consumer video devices, gaming systems, and home office electronic items may be brought in for recycling on any collection day. **UP TO SEVEN TV'S/MONITORS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT THE COST OF \$10.00 EACH.**

Paint: Household generated paint, stain, and varnish will be accepted on any collection day. There is no cost for bringing in paint. The products must be in labeled, original containers. **Household Hazardous Waste is not accepted at this facility!** Check our schedule on the **Recycle Coach App** for updates on County Household Hazardous Waste dates and for other collections.

Saturday Collections for Each Month:

April 18th, 2026

May 16th, 2026

June 13th, 2026

July 11th, 2026

August 15th, 2026

September 19th, 2026

October 17th, 2026

November 14th, 2026

December 12th, 2026

Macon County Environmental Management's collection events will be held at the Recycling Center located at 151 W. Wood St., Decatur, IL

**For more information on acceptable/unacceptable items:
Visit www.MaconGreen.com or call 217/425-4505**

BLOOMS & BUTTERFLIES FESTIVAL

Where flowers grow and butterflies steal the show.

AUG 1 & 2 2026

- SUNFLOWER STROLL
- BUTTERFLY RELEASE
- LADYBUG RELEASE
- POLLINATOR ACTIVITIES
- FREE FACE PAINTING
- PICK & PLAY

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT MARIAHSMUMS.COM/FARMCALNDAR



MUSIC BINGO

WITH THE DECATUR PARKS FOUNDATION!

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6 · 7:30 P.M. · \$20

DEVON LAKESHORE AMPHITHEATER

Purchase tickets at devonamphitheater.com

behind every **EXPERIENCE**
Decatur Parks Foundation

THE **DEVON** LAKESHORE AMPHITHEATER

All proceeds benefit the Decatur Parks Foundation.

10	26	39	55	70
11	19	38	58	74
43	27	46	63	
3	18	37	49	67
7	28	36	50	64

MARIAH'S MUMS & MORE

TRIPLE **M** FARM

20 09

CLINTON, ILLINOIS

PICK & PLAY

Every Thursday in August

5:30pm - 8:30pm

THE DEVON LAKESHORE AMPHITHEATER

CAIN

WITH SPECIAL GUEST BAND REEVES

AUGUST 8

DEVONAMPHITHEATER.COM
DECATUR, ILLINOIS

SPEED & LUBE
10-Minute Oil Change Shops



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:15 am Live Stream on Facebook and in sanctuary BSA 6-8pm	3 VBS 6-8pm	4 VBS 6-8pm 9:30 am Kiwanianne Club Meeting Fellowship Hall	5 VBS 6-8pm	6 VBS 6-8pm	7 VBS 6-8pm	8 CAIN Concert
9 9:15am Live Stream on Facebook and in sanctuary Blessing of the backpacks Mutual Ministry 10:30am BSA 6-8pm	10	11 9:30 am Kiwanianne Club Meeting Fellowship Hall	12 5:30 Exec 6:00 Finance 7:00 Property	13	14	15
16 9:15am Live Stream on Facebook and in sanctuary BSA 6-8pm	17	18 9:30 am Kiwanianne Club Meeting Fellowship Hall	19 6:00pm Council	20	21	22
23 9:15am Live Stream on Facebook and in sanctuary BSA 6-8pm	24 Prep for rummage sale	25 Prep for rummage sale	26 Prep for rummage sale	27 WELCA Rummage Sale 9a-4p	28 WELCA Rummage Sale 9a-Noon	29
30 Joint Worship Service at FELC						

FAITHFUL SERVANTS

August 2026

THANK
YOU!

Date	8/2	8/9	8/16	8/23	8/30
Greeter	Joan Smith	Joni Mears	Carolyn Hughes		@ FELC
Deacon	Cora Hughes		Kay Davis Warren	Cora Hughes	@ FELC
Usher	Tracy Johnson	Greg Warren		Greg Warren	@ FELC
Lector	Cora Hughes	Kay Davis Warren	Theresa Edmonds		@ FELC
Coffee Host	Cora & Carolyn Hughes		Carolyn Hughes	Theresa Edmonds	@ FELC
Cleaning	Mark & Joyce Jennings (B)	Ted Corrigan (A)	Greg Warren (B)	Ted Corrigan (A)	Kathy & Wayne Carter (B)
Acolyte		Sawyer Craycraft			@ FELC
Altar Guild	Chris Hamilton	Chris Hamilton	Kathy Carter	Kathy Carter	@ FELC
Mowing	Richard Wade & Jaren Lawson	Deb Weger & Sara Corrigan	Ted Corrigan	Greg Warren & Richard Wade	Ted Corrigan & Jaren Lawson

