



NOVEMBER 2025

THE FORTRESS

Newsletter of Concordia Lutheran Church, Preschool & Academy

DATES TO NOTE

- 11.2 . All Saint's Day
- 11.7 . Euchre Night
- 11.16 . Stewardship
Sunday
- 11.16 . Run, Hide, Fight
Training
- 11.26 . Thanksgiving Eve
Service
- 11.30 . Advent Festival

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

*Children's Christmas
Program*

Contact the Board of Ed.

Advent Festival

Contact the Trustees

Swaddling Clothes

Sign-up or contact
Jamie Kotovsky

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

From Pastor

Dear Saints,

"...and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen."

The concluding lines of the Apostles' Creed bid us to look forward to the future. Faced with daily troubles we are eager for the days when we will no longer have such difficulties. But when will that be? Jesus tells us not to be worried about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself (Matthew 6:34). Are we longing for a future on earth that will never be? For as soon as we believe we have made an accomplishment or escaped trouble, another difficulty arises, another concern, another struggle, another stress. *"In this world you will have tribulation"*, says Jesus, *"but take heart, I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33).

In Revelation, this sinful world—even life in this sinful world—is known as the great tribulation. *"These [who are clothed in white robes and standing before the throne of God in heaven] are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"* (Revelation 7:14). Those who have gone before us with the sign of faith, they are looking forward to the same day we are—the day of the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. While these saints rest safely in the hands of God, having finished their course in faith, (we sing in For All The Saints) *"we feebly struggle, [while] they in glory shine"*. This great tribulation is our struggle with sin and wickedness and evil in this life. And it takes a toll on us.

God does not leave us without hope. *"[O]ur Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, ...loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace"* (2 Thessalonians 2:16). This is grace, that Jesus came to this great tribulation to suffer through it for us, in our place, so that all who abide in Him will not suffer eternally. He was troubled, and He endured faithfully. He had no place to lay His head, yet all His needs were provided. He looked forward to the cross (Hebrews 12:2), for thereby He would accomplish salvation for us. He has died, and behold, He is risen from the dead, never to die again! Death no longer has dominion over Him (Romans 6:9)!

And the One who is raised from the dead and is seated on the throne will keep those who die in Him safe until the day of the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Look forward to this blessed end! Until then He comforts us and strengthens us to endure by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit acts and works through the Holy Christian Church and the Means of Grace. The communion of saints gather with one another and with Christ, as He comes to be present with us, to comfort, console, and encourage one another in this Christian faith and life. Together we are granted the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, and future promises will come to pass. Then because of the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection is ours, along with eternal life in Paradise. The Word of the Lord endures forever, and all who are in the Word will also endure to the end!

*And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
and hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.
Alleluia, Alleluia! (For All The Saints v.4)*

Until that future day is now, the peace of Christ be yours!

Rev. Stephen Mueller

Pastor Mueller

Transferred from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant:

Claire 'Skip' Farnam died on September 6, 2025.
His funeral service was held on September 15th.
Christian burial was at Oakwood Cemetery,
in Geneseo.



*We find lasting comfort in the promise of God: "Be thou
faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."
Revelation 2:10*

Run Hide Fight Training

**1:00 PM on Sunday, November 16th at Concordia
with Det Sgt Brian Haars - Henry County Sheriff's Office**

This training will last approximately 60-90 minutes. Det Sgt Haars will review what to do in the event that we have an active shooter situation in the community, an intruder in our church/school and other safety ideas for how to get us and others out of harm's way. All are welcome to attend!



**We will join together Sunday, November 30th
at Noon to decorate our church for the
Advent and Christmas season! All hands are
greatly needed and appreciated.**



Magister Magnus Honorees

Recently, the Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education recognized Rev. Joel and Marilyn Brondos as Magister Magnus and Magistra Magna with gratitude for exceptional vision, service, and dedication for the cause of classical Lutheran education. What an immense blessing it is to have their wisdom, experience, and genuine generosity of spirit at Concordia and our sister churches. When you see Joel & Marilyn next, join us in thanking them for their years of service and sharing Christ's love with the next generations.

OPEN FOR SHOPPING - NOVEMBER 13TH 4-7 PM & NOVEMBER 22ND 9-NOON

SWADDLING CLOTHES

**Volunteer to help our
community today!**

Sharing the mercy of Christ with our neighbors through the gifts of clothing, food, friendship, and the forgiving Word of God.



PRESCHOOL PRESS

From Mrs. Roberts

Blessings to our Concordia Church Family!

As we enter this season of thanksgiving, I need to express our gratitude to you for your support of our preschool. Your prayers, gifts, and time have been used by God to share his love with our students and their families for his glory. We are so blessed to partner with you in sharing the Good News of Jesus as we equip this generation on their educational journey.

In October, we learned about fire safety during National Fire Prevention Month. We had field trips to the Geneseo Fire Department and each class practiced a fire drill.

We are leaning in to a time of harvest as we look at the blessings that God has given us. We celebrate together during our Thanksgiving program and potluck feast on November 19th.

Thank you again for your support!



ACADEMY ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Mrs. Coppejans

October was a fun and faith-filled month at Concordia Lutheran Academy! We began the month focusing on fire safety, learning how we can care for our neighbors and ourselves by being alert and prepared. For Fire Safety Week, our students enjoyed a special visit to the Geneseo Fire Station, where they had the opportunity to see the equipment up close, spray the firehose, and learn from our community's brave first responders. We are thankful for their service and protection, and for the chance to learn from them.

In science, we continued our study of God's creation by exploring the periodic table. Students were amazed to discover how elements are ordered and connected, and

they especially enjoyed making slime while studying the Boron Group—an activity that was both educational and delightfully messy!

In our catechism lessons, students reached an important milestone as they completed memorization of the Ten Commandments. We celebrate this accomplishment with thanksgiving for the way God's Word shapes our hearts and guides our daily lives.

As the month drew to a close, our studies turned to Martin Luther and the Reformation. Through the last week of October, students learned how God used Luther to restore the truth of salvation by grace

through faith in Christ alone—an enduring reminder of God's mercy and steadfast love.

As we look ahead to November, our focus will turn toward gratitude—cultivating thankful hearts as we prepare for Thanksgiving and reflect on all that the Lord provides for our students, families, and school community. We will also take time to honor the men and women who have served our country in the armed forces, giving thanks to God for their sacrifice and for the freedoms we are blessed to enjoy. Above all, we give thanks to our gracious Heavenly Father, whose love and faithfulness bless our school each and every day.



Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.

3 John 1:11



Youth

on

WEDNESDAY!

**3x the youth.
3x the Word.
3x His grace.**

Sept. 3 - April 29

**NO YOW!
NOV. 26**

SPARKS

YOW! will kick off each week igniting the SPARK in our elementary-age youth! All kids and their friends in grades K-5th are invited to attend. From 3:30 - 5:00, they will hear God's Word through a lesson and verse, have activities designed to help them understand how the Bible applies to them, and engage in energizing games. This year we are putting Bible stories to the test with mock trials in our YOW! courtroom!

BREAKING BREAD

The importance of eating a meal together is something frequently highlighted in the Bible. Every Wednesday from 5:00 - 5:30, a meal will be offered to ALL K-12 youth attending YOW! that day.

CATECHISM CLASS

Why do we believe what we believe? How do we know what we believe is true? Beginning at 5:00 with our meal and continuing from 5:30 - 7:00, Catechism Class answers these questions for 6th-8th graders.

ROCKS

What gives us the ROCK solid foundation to boldly live our faith and explain it? Come find out! After our meal together until 7:00, High Schoolers will build on the teachings from catechism class. Group activities will be announced throughout the year - stay tuned!

CLOSING

At 7:00 - 7:15 Catechism class and the Rocks will gather in the church for a closing with Word and prayer.



Concordia LWML met on October 9, 2025. Our meeting started with prayer and we adjourned for a delicious pumpkin dessert made by Barbara Miller. We enjoyed our dessert and a short time of fellowship. Joyce Dodge was our leader this month. She opened with prayer at the beginning of the meeting using the prayer from our booklet "Prayer - For the Church". Our role call was answered with members responding with a name of a famous person that they have met or wishes to meet. Our hymn of the day was "Lord Jesus Christ, With Us Abide". Barbara gave the devotion from the book "Lutheran 101" titled "How should we pray"? Minutes were read and approved with one correction. Treasurer's report showed a balance of \$785.90. Joyce reported that a thank you was received from Vicar Josh Bieri. Josh is one of our people that we support monthly. We also received a thank you note from CLL for helping with the funeral for Skip Farnam.

Old Business: October has been a busy month for the LWML. We attended the Fall Rally at Immanuel Lutheran in Rock Island. We helped with the Skip Farnam funeral, hosted a LWML Sunday, and served David Hull's baptism luncheon. New Business: Help is needed to make coffee on Sunday mornings. If you would like to come early on Sunday mornings then sign up on the sheet of paper lying on top of the coffee machine. The instructions are there also. It takes about 35 minutes to make coffee.

There is help needed with the Swaddling Clothes project. Check in at the church office for more information. The Swaddling Clothes room is open on the 2nd Thursday from 4 pm to 7 pm and on the 4th Saturday from 9 am to 12 pm. Basically the job is helping the customers to pick out and bag their choices.

We are gathering up the ingredients to bake cookies for the Cookie Walk on December 13, 2025. Any help the congregation can give us with baking is always appreciated.

Our program this month was Care Packages Assembly & Mailing to college/military people. We all brought goodies for 13 college students and 1 US Marine. Mites were collected. A mite devotion was read. Respectfully submitted, Patricia A. Kohrell

September 2025 - Concordia Ladies League met on September 11, 2025 with 9 members and 3 guests present. Hosting for the day were Sherry Wechsler and Mary Hull. They served a Trifle dessert with nuts and candies. Our question of the day was: What is your favorite Bible verse? Mary Hull read the devotion "Of the word". Mary Hull took attendance and read the minutes for August and they were approved as read. She also read and passed around a thank you note from Teri and Paul Mosher. Janett Farnum gave the treasurer's report and it was approved as read.

The funeral lunch for Skip Farnum was discussed. Janett stated that the meat, buns, and potatoes have been taken care of by her. All we would need to donate would be a salad or dessert. Sherry stated that LWML members will also donate food and help with the luncheon if needed. Water, Lemonade, coffee will be served as beverages. Marta said that the tables would be set up on Sunday morning after second service. Come at 8:30 on Monday morning if you can help set up.

Making coffee on Sunday morning was discussed. Pastor explained further to us Kristi Ott's idea of Joyful Scribes - YOW! kids and older members of the congregation writing pen pal letters to each other once a month. Sherry took a head count of people who would like to participate. If anyone else wants to join in, please notify Sherry.

Joy Noard sent out cards to: Farnum family - Sympathy; Fama Prokup, Joline Parrish, Doris Paxton, Marcia Himmelman, Lois Misfeldt, Wendy Grunwald, Dean & Diane DePauw, and Sandy Zanfes - Thinking of you.

Sherry went through our schedule coming up. Our next meeting will be October at 1:00 at the church.

We closed our meeting with The Lord's Prayer. Respectfully submitted, Mary Hull, Secretary

October 2025 - Concordia Ladies League met on October 9, 2025 with 11 members and 1 guest attending. Hosting for the day were Marta Licht and Jeannette Mingo. The table was decorated beautifully for fall and the dessert was a pumpkin poke cake with nuts and candies also served. The devotion was a lesson on Martin Luther and the Small Catechism by Pastor Mueller. President Sherry Wechsler called the meeting to order. The question of the day was "What is your favorite childhood memory?" Mary Hull took attendance and read the minutes for the September meeting. The minutes were approved as read. Janett Farnam gave the treasurer's report and it was approved.

Marta reported that she sent LWML a thank you card for helping with the Ship Farnam funeral lunch. Setup for our annual bake sale will be Saturday October 18 at 11:00 with the bake sale taking place on Sunday morning October 19.

Joy Noard sent Halloween cards to: Joline Parrish, Roger Hull, Dean & Diane Depauw, Doris Paxton, Fama Prokup, Marcia Himmelman, Eileen Ekilor, Phil Jahn, Sue Smithson, Deb Williams, Sandra Zanfess, and Wendy Grunwald, and a Baptism card to David Hull.

Our next meeting will be November 13 at 1:00 with Pastor Mueller giving a program about their Hawaii trip.

We closed the meeting with The Lord's Prayer. Respectfully submitted, Mary Hull, Secretary

CONCORDIA
Ladies League

In our prayers...

Concordia Family: Marc Motzer, Marcia Himmelman, Nash, Mary Miller, Joline Parrish, Lenore Vandevoord, Elizabeth Erdman, Paul Mosher, Jenni DeGerengel, Wendy & Jon Grunwald, Roger Hull, Jackson Kinnard, Phil Jahn, Cindy Wagoner, Fama Prokup, Martin Fleming, Sue Smithson, Julie Kuse, Janine Persefield, Lois Misfeldt, Brad Watters, our inactive members **Friends of Concordia:** Donte Nystrom, Renee Hull, Colin, Steve Lee, Dan & Lisa Gordon, Tammy Bruns, Craig, Jim & Jennifer Garner, Jeff McQuaid, Jay & Tammy Sheldon, Barbara Sigwalt, Joe Moriarity, Debbie DelFiacco, Debbie Hardesty, Justin Rittenhouse, Megan & Daxton Crain, Ann Key, A.J. Gale, Judy & Gary Magnuson, Julie Fiers, Karen Wright, Helen Stewart, John Cross, John Gravitt, Tony Snell, Cameron Mayo, Joan Maier, Chris Frisk, Connie Wagner, Alice Wright, Ed Schulmeister, Stephanie Kursock, Joan McCarron

Our church workers. Our Synodical leaders: Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison - Synod President, Rev. Michael Mohr - CID President. **Our nation's leaders:** especially President Trump and Governor Pritzker. **The Armed Forces, law enforcement officers, and firefighters.**

If you wish to submit a prayer request, please contact Pastor or the office. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or are admitted to the hospital, please call the church office. In the event of an after-hours emergency please contact Pastor at (309) 944-2827.

Please continue to pray for the mission of Concordia.

As Christian stewards, let us constantly be reminded and thankful that all gifts - **time, talent, and treasure - are gifts from God;** and be encouraged to use them in God pleasing ways.



Funds Status as of September 31, 2025

Approved 2025 budget is \$346,182

	Sept.	YTD
Income	25,104.19	276,558.11
Expenses	28,405.71	258,143.64
Income Less Expense	-3,301.52	18,414.47

Odds and Ends - Some things remain the same but are important none the less!

Please put your name on pew envelopes. We want to give you credit for all your contributions on your year-end records. We appreciate your generosity to all the various missions/activities we sponsor and support!

Large Print Portals of Prayer are available to our members with vision difficulties. If you are in need of one, please contact Linda Hull or the church office.

Voter's Meetings - Become a voting member of our congregation and help make decisions for our church! The only conditions are being 18 years of age and a current member at Concordia. Please talk to Brian Wahlheim (Church President) or the church office for more details.

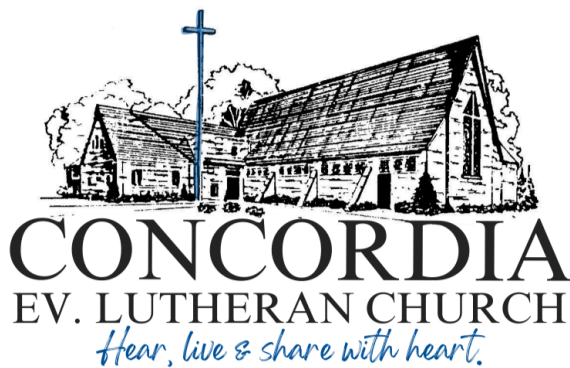
Next Voter's Meeting: January 11, 2026 - 1:30 PM

Remember: Please contact the office to inform us of a name, address, marital status, number, or email change.

If you admitted to a hospital, be sure to say you are a member of Concordia Lutheran or have a family member or friend call the office or Pastor Mueller. Otherwise, we may not be aware of your hospitalization. Thank you.

Check out the greeting cards in the display rack! For only \$1.00 you can get a pretty card for your occasion and the money goes to LWML missions.

The little House in the back of the sanctuary is a collection for A Dollar for Missions! What is A Dollar for Missions? The Central Illinois District (CID) encourages its congregations to invite their members to contribute one dollar per member per week for missions, in addition to their ordinary offerings. This kind of over-and-above giving is called "A Dollar for Missions". These gifts will aid the CID in caring for different needs of its missions such as university churches and student centers.



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CHURCH LEADERSHIP:

Brian Wahlheim - President
Allison Drockelman - Secretary
Mindy Brown - Treasurer

DEACONS & MEMBER LAST NAMES:

Shawn Anderson & Brian Wahlheim	A-C
Mark Ouart & Andy Raschke	D-G
Derek Drockelman & Greg Wisely	H-K
Dick McMullen & Don Miller	L-N
Bill Kramer & Jeremy Dodge	O-R
Kenny Grom & Ryan Hull	S-Z

NEXT FORTRESS DEADLINE:

Tuesday, November 15

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday
School Day - 9am-3pm
Non-School Day - 9am-Noon

DIRECTORY

Rev. Stephen Mueller

pastor@concordiageneseo.com
Parsonage: (309) 944-2827

Stephanie Prochaska & Allison Drockelman

Office Staff
office@concordiageneseo.com

Amy Roberts, Preschool Teacher

preschool@geneseolutheranchurch.com

Katie Coppejans, Academy Teacher

kcoppejans@concordialutheranacademy.com

Mindy Brown, Treasurer

bookkeeper@geneseolutheranchurch.com

Erica Johnson, Custodian

custodian@concordiageneseo.com

MONTHLY SCHEDULE

Every Monday (Sept-May)
6:30 PM - Bible Study

Every Tuesday (Sept-May)
10:00 AM - Bible Study

Every Wednesday (Sept-May)
YOW!

**NO YOW!
NOV. 26**

3:30 PM - SPARKS
5:00 PM - Breaking Bread Meal
5:30 PM - Catechism Class
5:30 PM - ROCKS

1st Thursday
6:30 PM - Board of Education Meeting

2nd Tuesday
1:00 PM - LWML Meeting
4:00 PM - Stewardship Board Meeting

2nd Thursday
1:00 PM - CLL Meeting
4-7 PM - Swaddling Clothes Open
6:00 PM - Care Committee Meeting

2nd Sunday of Jan, May, Oct
1:30 PM - Voters Assembly

2nd Monday (Aug-May)
Pastor at Circuit Pastor's Winkel

3rd Sunday
12:30 PM - Board of Deacons Meeting

3rd Thursday
6:30 PM - Church Council Meeting

4th Thursday
6:30 PM - Evangelism Board Meeting
6:30 PM - Trustee Board Meeting

4th Saturday
9 AM-Noon - Swaddling Clothes Open

November Special Dates:

11.7 . Euchre Night at 5:30 PM
11.16 . Run, Hide, Fight Training at 1:00 PM
11.26 . Thanksgiving Eve Service at 7:00 PM
11.30 . Advent Festival at Noon

11.16 . Children's Program Practice
11.23 from 3:00-4:30 PM for preschoolers
& 11.30 through 8th graders