

O S L MESSENGER

OCTOBER 2026
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 8



We celebrate the baptism of
Kollyns Kay Johnson!

We pray that her life is filled with
the enduring joy of the Holy Spirit.

May she walk a long and faithful
path, surrounded by love, guided by
truth, and always anchored in God's
grace.

Welcome to the family of faith, little
one!

Kollyns is pictured with her parents,
Jared & Kyleigh Johnson, and
Pastor Gary.

Shout-Out to
Kynley Allington!

Thanks for serving as
Assistant Minister and earning
those confirmation points.

Great job!

Confirmation students,
we encourage you all to
participate!



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from Pastor Gary's Desk

It's been pretty rainy here the past few days. Frankly, this is one of the rainiest summers I've seen in a while. We had some hot, humid, sunny days, but I've been surprised with all the cloudy, wet days. It's getting to a point where farmers are starting to complain about the rain. Of course, if you've been following this, there is a good reason for this. We are in a super El Niño year, which affects weather patterns across the entire world. I couldn't explain it any better than a Wikipedia article or good YouTube video could, and that's not what you're here for.

Some people are benefitting from El Niño. Some people are suffering from it. From farmers wondering when they can get out into their fields, to people facing flash floods and losing their homes, all the way to people suffering from exacerbated drought conditions, this climate can be punishing. And it begs the question, like with many other things, why does God allow this? Why does God permit weather to hurt people? Or to make it even more challenging, why does God permit weather to hurt some people and help others?

I recently discussed this question with the confirmation students, breaking it down into three possible answers. There are probably more, but three is enough for us to ponder for now. Let me know if you'd like me to add any. One, God is punishing us for praying badly or sinful behavior. If we have trouble in this world, it's because God is angry with us. Two, God is testing us when things go wrong. Everything happens for a reason. If we are having trouble, God is challenging our faith to grow. Three, sometimes things happen outside of God's control, and God can't always be expected to intervene. Miracles happen, but usually God lets the world run the way God designed it. Actions have consequences. If we are having trouble, God is walking beside us, but God isn't the cause of the problem.

I want to start by rejecting the first option. It is certainly a perspective expressed in the Bible, but I have a couple problems with it. It doesn't help us understand why bad things might happen to good people. Unless they have committed some secret sin, we wouldn't expect decent people to suffer more than anyone else, but that happens all the time. Even if you blame it on secret sins, what do we say about children who die within hours of being born? What sin did they commit in their brief lives to earn them that fate? But furthermore, assuming that people who are suffering simply deserve it makes us much more likely to dismiss their pain and ignore them. If God is against them, why should I reach out to comfort them? I don't want to get in God's way. But in reality, people go through hard times all the time, and it usually isn't their fault. We should avoid treating people like they are worse than us because they are suffering more. Rather, we should comfort them, help them if we can, and at the very least pray for them.

Option two works sometimes. If you get a speeding ticket, maybe God is trying to tell you to ease off the gas pedal. If you lose your job, maybe God is telling you to trust in God alone and now your own strength and skill. If a tornado destroys your house, maybe God is telling you to turn to your neighbors and seek hospitality from all the people who love you. In all of these ways, we could optimistically say that God is strengthening our faith through times of trial. We should be cautious though. It is easy to claim this for ourselves, but it is harder to claim this for other people. Surely, we all know by now, that it is no great comfort to a parent mourning the death of their child to tell them that God is teaching them something through this tragedy. Furthermore, sometimes there is no lesson to be learned, and tragedies serve only to break our faith.

from Pastor Gary's Desk

Option three works most of the time, but it still has a problem. Maybe God has good reason to leave the world as it is most of the time. Sure, God can intervene with miracles, but who knows what consequences miracles may have? God established the order of the universe, the laws of physics and chemistry, and they were good when God made them. Maybe sometimes the weather is just outside of our control. Maybe sometimes tragedies just happen, and all we can do is pray to God for comfort and consolation. God walks with us through this valley of tears, but that doesn't mean God has to break the laws of physics to protect us from harm.

And that is the problem with the third view. If God really loves us, why wouldn't God intervene, even changing nature on our behalf? Well, could we say the same for us? God has gifted humanity with massive societies that can work together for the common good, with inventiveness and creativity. I don't know to what extent El Niño is impacted by climate change, but maybe we can do something about it. We can't entirely control the climate, but we can do our part to be more energy efficient and reduce pollution.

But even on a smaller scale, when someone's house is destroyed in a fire or flood, we can help them. We can be the miracle God sends into their lives. When someone gets a bad diagnosis and doesn't know how to carry on in life, we can sit and talk with them, bring them food and necessities, drive them to appointments if need be. It's hard for us to complain that God isn't changing the laws of nature to save us from disaster when we aren't even always doing what we can to save each other. We can't stop a tornado, but we can help pick up the pieces of a broken home and broken life.

If you have a different explanation for why bad things happen that seem out of our control, please let me know. I'd love to hear your opinions. I'm convinced there is no easy answer to this question that works for all people in all situations. But as with most things in life, when in doubt, our best bet is to follow Christ's example. Love and care for the people who are suffering, and trust in God when the hard times fall on you. Somehow, even when we don't feel it, God is watching over us, holding us, and showing us grace and mercy, no matter what challenges we stumble over.

BE THE WELCOME BEFORE THE WORSHIP!

A warm smile, a friendly handshake, and a cheerful hello can make someone's day before the service even begins!

We're inviting church families to sign up (sheet is on the table in the entry way) to greet before our Sunday services and help create a welcoming atmosphere for members and guests alike. It's a simple way to serve together and share Christ's love from the moment people walk through the doors.

Sign up today and help us make every Sunday feel like coming home! ❤️🙏

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 25 - Community Coffee - Senior Benefits (Ray Manske) at Park Lodge - 10:00 a.m

October 1 - Bible Study @ 6:00 p.m.

October 2 - Community Coffee - Wymore Library - 10:00 a.m.

October 4 - Fields of Faith event - LYF will be Attending - Meet at Church of Christ at 5:00 p.m - see flyer for more info

October 9 - Community Coffee - Wymore Fire Department - 10:00 a.m.

October 14 - Confirmation Class Service Project - Mosaic Halloween Party @ 7:00 p.m.

October 15 - Bible Study @ 6:00 p.m.

October 16 - Community Coffee - Coffee Shop @ Heritage Inn - 10:00 a.m.

October 22 - Church Council Meeting @ 6:30 p.m.

October 23 - Community Coffee - Wymore City Office - 10:00 a.m.

October 25 - Spooktacular @ McCandles - 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Confirmation Class hosting a booth

October 30 - Community Coffee - St. Peter Lutheran Church - 10:00 a.m.

REMINDER:

A suggestion box has been placed on the table in the entry way.
Please feel free to put any suggestions or comments for the Council in it.

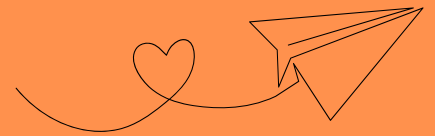
A Big Thank You to
Jaxson Mailahn!

You did a wonderful job
reading during the service!
We love seeing our youth use
their talents and take part in
worship. Thank you for your
willingness to serve!



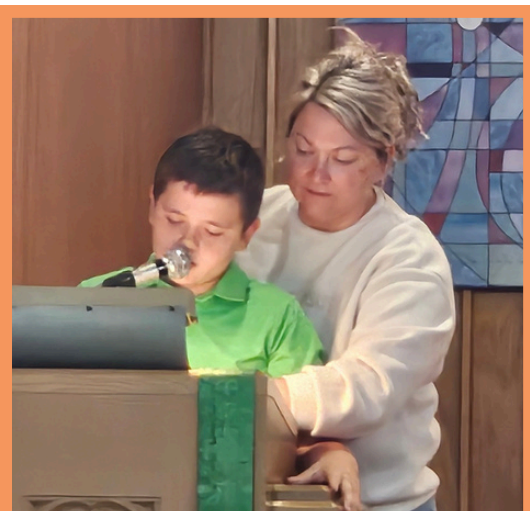
OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

03 - JAMIE SMIT
04 - RHONDA EPP
04 - RILEY WEGNER
07 - KEVIN MORSE
09 - DOROTHY ERMANN
10 - CARMEN MCKEEVER
13 - ROGER THEYE
14 - JOEL FOSSLER
16 - LANDEN MCKEEVER
17 - AMELIA MYER
26 - JASON ALLINGTON
27 - STEVE EPP
29 - NATALIE TRAUERNICHT
31 - SCOTT TRAUERNICHT



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

09 - JON & NEALEIGH ACTON
17 - CALEB & JESSE HARMS
18 - TRAVIS & JONNA ARNOLD
23 - DAVE & LINDA CREEVAN



Thank You!

A big thank you to the LYF kiddos, and their younger siblings, for helping clean up the church grounds for fall. Your hard work and servant hearts are greatly appreciated!



Lutheran
YOUTH
Fellowship

Hymn Requests



If you have a favorite hymn you'd love to hear in an upcoming worship service, we'd love to include it.

Simply fill out one of the cards on the table in the fellowship hall and place it in the basket.

Did You Know?

The new sound system includes assisted-listening devices for those using hearing aids.

If you would like to use one, please speak with a council member before the church service.

SAVE THE DATE! OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN FALL DINNER

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST

MORE INFO TO COME

FIELDS **OF** **FAITH**

CHANGE THE CULTURE

October 4, 2026

The House of Orange Complex

600 Orange Blvd, Beatrice, NE 68310

6:00 - 8:00 PM

**FREE DINNER FOR ALL STUDENTS, LIVE WORSHIP BAND,
STUDENT-LED PRAYER, & TESTIMONIES!**



**FIELDS
OF FAITH**

FIELDISOFFAITH.ORG

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Church Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Call to Order

The Our Savior Lutheran Church Council meeting was called to order by President Josh Schmidt. The meeting opened with prayer.

Attendance

Present: Josh Schmidt, Rachel Frerichs, Pam Gerdes, Roger Henrichs, Chavonn Mailahn (phone) and Pastor Gary Grinvalds.

Absent: Erin Saathoff, Jodi Wegner

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed. A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented, with the noted amendments/discussion. Roger's motion was seconded by Pastor and approved.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The previous meeting minutes were reviewed. Chavonn motioned to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded by Roger and approved.

Treasurer's Report

The previous month's treasurer's report was reviewed. Roger motioned to approve the report as distributed. The motion was seconded by Rachel and approved.

Pastor's Report

Official Membership Roster: The council discussed creating and maintaining an official membership roster. Membership participation expectations were reviewed, including attendance and a donation at least once during a calendar year. The purpose is to maintain an accurate record of active members.

Membership Records and Letter: Erin has a spreadsheet of members, and Maxine has information regarding donations. Chavonn has drafted a letter to be sent to members and will add the church constitution information before the letter is mailed.

Confirmation: Confirmation began September 9.

September 13 Service: Pastor will be away, Erin will read and use a sermon prepared by Pastor.

September 20 Communion/Baptism Service: The council discussed an experiment for the September 20 communion service in which parents would give communion to their children and then pass the line along. Hand sanitizer will be available, and an explanation will be included during the sermon. The congregation will be encouraged to continue moving forward after finishing.

Upcoming Baptism: The baptism of Jared and Kyleigh Johnson's daughter for September 20, and a council member will be asked to read and present the candle.

Old Business

Ushers: August/September service usher assignments were discussed.

Newsletter: Newsletter content wasn't discussed due to Erin being absent.

Listening Session: The listening session was discussed, including scheduling and whether the meeting should be rescheduled, moved to be discussed at next meeting.

Confirmation: The confirmation meeting was discussed; attendance was reported as strong.

Laptop: A laptop has been ordered at a cost of \$1,034.55.

WBSAF Grant: Grant status was discussed, including an iPad for SOS and other requested items.

Piano Tuning: Piano tuning was completed August 18–19.

Sound System: Sound system installation was scheduled for Thursday, August 27, with completion targeted by Sunday.

Associate Ministers: The council is continuing to work on a list of associate ministers and discussed creating a sign-up sheet. Names currently listed include Josh, Erin, Chavonn, Jodi, Darla, Carmen, Jessi, and Shirley. The goal is to have approximately eight or more people participate.

South Sign: Plans were discussed to repair the lights on the south sign, with Roger assisting as the electrician, and to replace the interior with assistance from Daryl.

Parish Meetings: The council discussed keeping parish meetings in the 1st and 4th quarters, with Zoom meetings used for the other two quarters as needed. The 4th-quarter date and a shared Google agenda were identified for follow-up.

Fall Get-Together: The Fall Get-Together with Filley was noted for December 6.

Downspouts: Five 10-foot downspouts are needed. The cost discussed was \$22.98 per 10-foot section at Home Depot. Josh will obtain the downspouts.

Parking Lot Lines: Painting parking lot lines along the sidewalk was discussed. The possibility of borrowing equipment from the school was noted, along with contacting the City if needed.

Emergency Lighting: The council discussed approving the purchase of emergency lights and hand sanitizer box.

Morris Grant: Potential projects for the next Morris Grant were discussed. Suggestions included replacing the concrete at the front entrance, screens/windows and the front door, landscaping cleanup, a new garbage disposal, and new flooring in the office, new visitor chairs for the pastor's office, new light at the front entrance/light pole and a yard light were also discussed.

New Business

Senate Grant: The church received information regarding a \$1,000 Senate grant, with funds due October 1. A submission of 200 words or less was discussed, including the theme and assisting-minister-related information.

Spirit of Ministry Event: The Spirit of Ministry event at Glacial Till Cider House is scheduled for Sunday, September 27, from 2:00–4:00 p.m. The council discussed mission-sharing and a donation/raffle basket valued at approximately \$50–\$100.

Next Council Meeting: The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 16, at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Services: Christmas Eve service times were discussed. The proposed times noted were 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.; last year's times were referenced for comparison.

Action Items / Follow-Up

- Confirm the rescheduled listening session date/time.
- Follow up on WBSAF grant status and requested items.
- Finalize the associate minister list and sign-up process.
- Determine the 4th-quarter parish meeting date and establish a shared Google agenda.
- Obtain five 10-foot downspouts (Josh).
- Coordinate parking lot line painting and equipment can be borrowed from the school (Rachel)
- Coordinate the Larry Frerichs' shed project after harvest.
- Confirm details and donation/raffle basket for the September 27 Spirit of Ministry event.
- Confirm the next council meeting time.
- Finalize Christmas Eve service times.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Roger and seconded by Rachel. The motion was approved, and the meeting was adjourned.

Closing Prayer

The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

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