



St. John's Lutheran Church

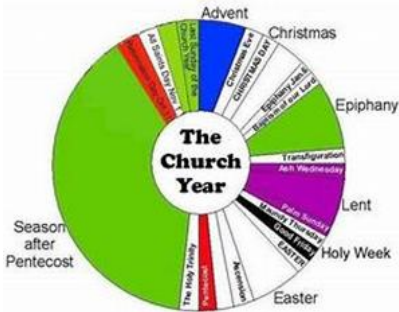
"EVER LOVING, CARING ALWAYS"

• **January 2026 Newsletter** •

Sunday Worship and Children's Church (K-6): 9am

229 S. First St, PO Box 234
Pearl City, IL 61062
815-443-2215

Pastor Len Hoffmann
Email: prshadmin@gmail.com
www.stjohnspearlcity.org



Welcome to the New Year – January 2026

January 4 – Last Sunday of Christmas

Epiphany season in the Lutheran Church Year for Series A typically begins on January 6 and lasts until the beginning of Lent, which varies each year.

Key Dates:

- Epiphany: January 6
- Baptism of Our Lord: The Sunday following Epiphany
- Transfiguration of Our Lord: The last Sunday before Lent

Themes:

- The season emphasizes the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles, highlighted by the visit of the Magi.
- Key readings often focus on Jesus' ministry, miracles, and teachings.

Liturgical Color:

- The color for the Epiphany Season is typically green, symbolizing growth and life.

Scripture Readings:

Series A readings include passages from the Gospel of Matthew, particularly focusing on Jesus' identity and mission.

Join the journey every Sunday at 9:00 am. If you are unable to be here in person, join us on Facebook live.

Blessed New Year and Epiphany.

Pastor Len Hoffmann

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS!!

Sunday School: We will not be meeting again until Sunday, January 11, 2026. We continue to meet every Sunday into the year 2026 as it seems to have been working well. Using the new curriculum from Spark House has given us the opportunity to include many volunteer teachers that can access the online program. The children engage in bible stories, activities, videos, games, and crafts. We invite any child between the age of 3 through 5th grade to join the group. We can always use extra teachers so if you feel the calling to help out speak with Grace Heimerdinger-Baake, Morgan Scharping, Theresa Snetcher, or Shawn Kuhlemeier.



The Stephenson County Veterans Pantry in Lena is in need of small canned ham, cans of chicken breast, cans of tuna, canned fruit, laundry soap, hand soap, and body wash. Donations can be brought to Lena American Legion Home on Saturdays from 10-11 AM. It is located at 316 W. Main Street in Lena. All donations are welcome!

The Grace Meal committee is always looking for people to help prepare and serve the monthly meals! If you think that this is something you could commit to, talk to Marge Roiland, Lois Hunsaker, or Kris Eden! We meet the first Sunday of the month to discuss the upcoming meals! You don't have to know any recipes—just be able to help prepare and serve. Thanks.



Don't forget that everyone is welcome to come to dominoes on the first Tuesday of every month from 9AM to Noon. The next one will be January 6th! Invite others! Cards and dominoes are played on the second and fourth Thursday of each month from 1:00-3:30 PM as well. The next dates for that will be January 8th and 22nd!

In the coming months, we will be reaching out to all members who currently use envelopes to give to the church. We will be ordering another year of envelopes in the spring. If you currently use envelopes and want to continue to use them, that is fine. If you would like to learn how to set up a weekly or monthly recurring payment from a checking or savings account in order to give to the church, DJ can show you how to do that as well. If you decide to give through this recurring method, you can give to the current fund, the improvement fund, Healthy Wolves, and/or the Grace Meal. The QR code in the bulletin and later in this newsletter is used to give a one-time donation to the church from a credit or debit card.



Thank you!

Pastor Len and Cathy would like would like to thank everyone for your generous gifts and cards that they received this Christmas. We wish all of you a Joyous New Year!



***Women's Gathering invites the congregation/guests to eat out together. The next one will be on Sunday, January 4th at 11:30 AM at the Brew & Chew in Pearl City. Please sign up in the lobby by December 28th! Car pooling will be set up!**

Thank you to everyone who sent emails and cards to me for Christmas. Special thanks for all the bags of goodies and cookies that were left as well as the generous monetary gift. I'm not sure how everyone knew I liked chocolate. I might have to do some extra walking to work off all the extra calories! Your generosity and patience does not go unnoticed!! —DJ



Confirmation News. . .

Confirmation: We will not meet again until Sunday, January 18, 2026. We continue to meet on the first and third Sunday of each month right after the church service upstairs in the Youth Room. The study of the Apostles' Creed is going well and will take us through the rest of the 2026 confirmation year as well as the understanding of the bible and church service. Please remind your child to bring their bible with them to each meeting. If your child will not be attending the confirmation meeting, please let me know by text as I do not look at my emails on Saturday evening or Sunday morning. If you have any questions, please contact Shawn Kuhlemeier.



Date	Acolytes	Tech Support
Jan. 4	Jonah Schubert	Arianna Schoenhard
Jan. 11	Jonah Schubert	Arianna Schoenhard
Jan. 18	Brayden Heimerdinger	Arianna Schoenhard
Jan. 25	Brayden Heimerdinger	Arianna Schoenhard
Feb. 1	Jonah Schubert	Brayden Heimerdinger

If you can not help when you are scheduled, please email the church office of who your replacement is. Thank you!
(prshadmin@gmail.com)

Duties of the Church for January 2026

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Lector	Worship Assistant
Jan. 4	Rollin & Judy Nelson	Earl & Cindy Heimerdinger	Ron DePrisco	Theresa Albers
Jan. 11	Stuart & Shawn Kuhlemeier	Sara & Arianna Schoenhard	Chris Kempel	Kathy Hillmer
Jan. 18	Alex & Victoria Hansen	Lee & Stacey Block	Joan Stewart	Andrew Gronewold
Jan. 25	Doris Kness	Tracy Downs family	Deb Bremmer	Lori Kempel
Feb. 1	Nancy Trampel	Chad & Deb Bremmer family	Chad Bremmer	Kris Eden

Organist: Karen Bremmer/Kathy Hillmer

Counters: Chad Bremmer and Kelly Lawler

Men's Breakfast. . .

The Men's Breakfast is on the first Wednesday of the month, The next two are January 7th and February 4th! They are meeting at The Beltline Cafe in Freeport at 7:30 AM. See you there!



Grace Meal News. . .

Thank you to everyone who helped in the preparation of the Community Christmas meal on December 25th. The help was outstanding and included Roger Bronkema, Marion & Kris Eden, Randy & Sandy Faust, Kristopher & Hendrix Feld, Janet Ferguson, Wayne Fischer, Kristi Fransen, Nicey & Noah Galicia, Earl & Cindy Heimerdinger, Jim & Leann Heimerdinger, Gertrude & Gwen Heimerdinger, Greta Shimon, Grace Heimerdinger-Baake, River & Ron Kema, Karl Kempel, Christine Klatt, Marvin & Joan Klatt, Kelly Lawler, Rusty Liebenstein, Craig Lindquist, Penny Miller, Wayne & Angie Niehaus, Kayla, Niehaus, Judy & Rollin Nelson, Bob & Marge Roiland, DJ & Sandy Scott, and Dianne Semmerin.

The meal consisted of ham, hash brown casserole, corn, lime Jell-O salad, Hawaiian bun, and pie. A total of 296 meals were served with 28 deliveries, 18 dine-ins, and 250 curbside pickups. The community outreach response for donations was outstanding. This was a community project of Pearl City United Methodist Church, Zion Community Church, and St. John's Lutheran Church of Pearl City.

The Grace Meal Committee would like to thank the congregation for stepping up and making financial donations to help the great ministry continue serving meals each month. If you think you can help prepare or serve a meal talk to Kris Eden, Marge Roiland, or Lois Hunsaker!

Mark your calendar for Sunday, January 25th for the Annual meeting. It will take place immediately after worship that day in Luther Hall! The backup date will be Sunday, February 1st.



Have you ever wondered what goes on at the Church Council meetings each month? All the papers and forms discussed at each month's meeting are posted on the bulletin board right outside of Luther Hall! Check it out and ask questions if you have them.

Worship Services. . .

Worship services will continue to be held at St. John's in our sanctuary and live on Facebook. You are welcome to stop at the church on Friday or Saturday before worship and pick up a bulletin. The worship service online will be a complete service. The upcoming bulletin and the past three weeks of bulletins and announcements are now online at <http://www.stjohnspearlcity.org/bulletins-sermons>.

If you have a Facebook Account: You will be accessing the church's Facebook at St. John's Lutheran Church. (You will see the 125th Anniversary Quilt.) **If you Don't have a Facebook Account:** You may access the livestream via the St. John's website at www.StJohnsPearlCity.org. On the top right of the website has our Facebook page icon and you may click on it there.

Church Giving. . .

The church's ability to do ministry is dependent upon your regular gifts. St. John's is able to continue in the mission of the Church because of your faithfulness and financial commitment. While you may be joining us from worship at home, you can give online here: <http://www.stjohnspearlcity.org/giving> Other easy ways to give can also be found on our website by clicking on the GIVING tab.

"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19



Financial Committee Report . . .

The Current Fund expenses were higher than normal in September because our annual premium was due for the church insurance. The premium was \$10,208.39, which includes the Commercial Package Policy, the Commercial Umbrella, and Workers Comp.

Income vs Expense Comparison by Month

Current Fund	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Income	15,326	10,190	9,429	12,583	13,581	12,340	14,642	12,196	9,143	10,967	20,208		140,605
Expense	9,514	11,273	12,712	11,745	12,181	15,275	11,537	10,899	24,145	12,050	15,806		147,137
Difference	5,812	-1,083	-3,283	838	1,400	-2,935	3,105	1,297	-15,002	-1,083	4,402	0	-6,532

Improvement Fund	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Income	3,685	2,790	1,380	990	1,254	2,075	1,230	2,285	1,155	1,365	700		18,909
Expense	0	550	591	0	0	0	8,800	0	3,387	1,650	0		14,978
Difference	3,685	2,240	789	990	1,254	2,075	-7,570	2,285	-2,232	-285	700	0	3,931

Our Friends at Home . .

No one likes to be inside all the time. However we have many friends and members who are unable to attend services or activities with us. Please take a few moments to remember them by sending a small note, or a phone call. Let them know we are thinking of them. It only takes a few moments to brighten up someone's day. Contact the office at 815-443-2215 or email at prshadmin@gmail.com for address info.

Richard Brinkmeier	Ron Fluegel	Connie Melville	Mary Ellen Aurand	Donna Freedlund
Janis Kampmeier	Lori Miller	Shirley Goldsmith	Verda Werkheiser	Louise Cuccio
	Carol Byers	Gina Boop	Jerry Harnish	



The Kids Klub is back!! Join us for a monthly adventure designed for Kindergarten through 5th grade students. The program is supported by Pearl City area churches, offers a safe and supportive environment where your child can explore, make new friends, and learn valuable life skills. From games and crafts to Bible study and snacks. Kids Klub has something for everyone. It is free of charge and open to all children in the community. The next meeting is January 21st from 3:15-5:00 PM at St. John's. For more information or to register your child, please contact Pastor Roger Bronkema at rbronkema18@gmail.com or at 815-291-6261.

At the monthly zoom meeting for all call committees in the Northern Illinois synod, we met our new transitions leader. Our previous leader, Pastor Jen Beamsley, has taken a call in Washington, IL. That church has been without a pastor for five years. Our new transitions leader is Pastor Jen Henry. She lives in LeClere, Iowa. Pastor Jen is very excited to be part of NI synod's call process and brings an abundance of knowledge and enthusiasm.

The entire meeting was taken up by all of us introducing ourselves and congregations to Pastor Jen. We did learn there are approximately seventeen congregations without pastors in the synod. There are no pastors looking to move right now as it is the Christmas season. Hopefully after the first of the year, there will be more pastors looking to move. Please keep all congregations, seminarians, and pastors discerning the call process in your prayers.

**Call
Committee
Update**

Women's Gathering Ministries . .

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard – bring BABY WIPES

Food Pantry donations: Cream soups—chicken, mushroom, celery

Starting the EMAIL Prayer Chain: To start the email prayer chain, contact Karen Bremmer at ([815 443 2478](tel:8154432478) or [815 821 4698](tel:8158214698)) or email at rkbremmer@gmail.com You may also contact the church office at [815 443-2215](tel:8154432215) (please leave a message as they are checked after hours, etc.) or email at prshadmin@gmail.com. If you are not receiving the Prayer Chain email and would like to be included, please contact the church office.

*Women's Gathering has dish cloths for sale. They are \$1.50 each. Contact the church office or Lynda Palmer if you are interested.

*Prayer Shawl Outreach will meet on Sunday, January 4th. Start a shawl/quilt or work on one already started. Someone will be available to help.

*The next Women's Gathering meeting will be Tuesday, January 20th. 9:45 Fellowship and coffee with treats from Kris Eden and Janet Ferguson. 10:00 Bible study led by Shawn Kuhlemeier.

*The Women's Gathering funeral lunch committee thanks everyone who donated food and for money donations for the lunch following Carol Garnhart's funeral service at St. John's on December 6th and for Joyce Kempel's funeral on December 16th. We appreciate the donations and for all the help in planning, serving and clean-up. Thanks!

*A big THANK YOU to everyone who donated toward the Christmas gift cards for 73 children from Pearl City School. Women's Gathering will still be collecting through the end of the year. If we collect more than \$1825, we will donate the balance to the Food Pantry.



St. John's Giving page QR code

If you would like to give to St. John's using a debit or credit card, use this QR code to make a donation. This is a one-time donation, but if you would like to set up a reoccurring donation to St. John's from your checking or saving account, there is a form for this in the office that you can fill out to do that. Thank you for supporting the ministries of St. John's!

The Healthy Wolves backpack ministry is very thankful for your continuing financial support. Without you, we would not be able to supply weekend meals for those in need. The number of students needing help is twice the amount of last school year. You are indeed a blessing to our community.



It's that time of the year! If you are part of a committee or ministry, we need your report for 2025 for the annual book. Please get your report to DJ as soon as you can so that he can start putting the book together for our meeting in January! Take a look at last year's report to get an idea of what needs to be included!

The Harvest Home collection concluded on November 18, 2025. All grocery bags of donated items were delivered to the Pearl City Food Pantry after worship on November 18th. In addition to the grocery items, monetary donations of \$852.44 were also collected and donated.

The Giving Tree collection started on November 30th. We collected children's gloves for Pearl City School. We also collected shelf stable food items, paper products, and toiletries for The Veterans Footlocker. This collection will run through January 4th and all items will be delivered.





PEARL CITY HEALTHY WOLVES FOOD PROGRAM

Provides backpacks filled with nutritious meals and snacks for school aged children K-12 for the weekend. **We are currently sending 35 backpacks each week.** The cost of supplies runs about \$8.00 per backpack, per week. **Donations of financial support are needed.** Please contact Theresa Albers if you have any questions.

TO DONATE ONLINE: <http://www.stjohnspearlcity.org/giving> Scroll down to these instructions: **On-line Giving:** Click [here](#) to give now in the form of a credit or debit card to St. John's. This is a safe, secure and quick method to give to our ministries from anywhere at any time. On-line giving offers you the ability to do a onetime transaction or set-up a recurring transaction. This option allows members

and non-members alike to give to the ministries of St. John's. You will be able to select "Healthy Wolves" for your gift designation. If you would like to help back the backpacks, the group meets downstairs in the Healthy Wolves room in the new basement every Thursday at 3:15 PM! **Items of particular need are individually wrapped full size bars of soap, or monetary donations?**

January 2026

See an updated and complete calendar throughout the month at www.stjohnspearlcity.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
December 28 9a Worship 10a Christian Education meeting	29	30 9a Dominoes	31	January 1	2 3p Rooted & Rising Retreat	3 6a Rooted & Rising Retreat
4 9a Worship 10a Grace Meal meeting 10a Property meeting 10a Prayer Shawl ministry 11:30a Lunch Together	5 7p 4-H meeting	6 9a Dominoes	7 7:30a Men's Breakfast 9:30a Worship & Music Committee meeting	8 1p Cards & Dominoes 3:15p Healthy Wolves backpack packing	9	10
11 9a Worship 10a Stewardship/Outreach meeting 10a Memorial/Finance meeting 10a Helping Hands meeting 2p Historical Society meeting 6p 4-H Meeting	12 5:30p Girl Scout meeting 6p American Legion Auxiliary meeting	13	14	15 3:15p Healthy Wolves backpack packing	16	17 8a Grace Meal prep
18 9a Worship 10:15a Confirmation Class 10:30a Grace Meal	19	20 9:45a Women's Gathering meeting 5:30p Girl Scout meeting	21 3:15 Kids Klub meeting 7p Church Council meeting	22 1p Cards & Dominoes 3:15p Healthy Wolves backpack packing	23	24
25 9a Worship 10a Annual Meeting	26 5:30p Girl Scout meeting NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	27	28	29 3:15p Healthy Wolves backpack packing 6p Cub Scout meeting	30	31

January Birthdays

1	Blake Williams	13	Linda Erbsen	27	Lane Kempel
3	Sarah Hass		Benjamin Hass	28	Laura Gray
4	Lee Block	19	Richard Brinkmeier	29	Myles Freedlund
	Claire Rees	20	Stuart Hershey		Sawyer Williams
5	Jan Voss		Deaken Hofmaster		
9	Austin Block	22	Lincoln Voss		
	Shirley M. Goldsmith	25	Nicole (Lawler) Lavanway		
12	Brooke Hass	26	Alex Brinkmeier		