

**AUGUSTANA  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**

**Special points  
of interest:**

- Daylight Savings Begins!
- Can you help? Assisting Minister Sign-up
- Save the dates!
- Meet the staff
- Office Hours

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# The Messenger

Volume I, Issue I

March 2026

## Pastor's Page



*"I am the bread of life..." (John 6:35)*

Many years ago, when I was still in seminary I had a rather upsetting dream. I dreamed that I had been ordained; that I was now authorized to bless communion. I felt joy-filled and honored. However, when I uncovered the paten (the plate holding the wafers or bread) I discovered it was filled with Ritz crackers. I was

confused and wondered if I should offer people a whole cracker or break them into pieces. Before I figured out what to do, I woke up thinking that it was a very strange dream. I never imagined that years later I would find myself wondering what to do with some odd communion bread.

Not very long ago, I experienced a similar sense of surprise when I lifted the lid covering the bread. I saw what appeared to be some kind of banana or zucchini bread filled with fruit and nuts. I noticed it was neatly divided into two identical portions, and

my mind began to wonder what had happened. Was this something new the congregation had decided to try? Was it the only bread available? If there was no regular communion bread available, why hadn't they used wafers? I briefly pondered asking for an explanation or some kind of replacement; however, I didn't want to interrupt the flow of the service. And so, I continued by blessing it and doing my best to serve it. Attempting to break off appropriate pieces was more difficult than I had imagined. My fingers became sticky and the

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## Faith That Blooms Anew

"Why are you anxious?" asked our Lord. Then He said, *"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."* (Matthew 6:28-29, NIV) Jesus' words remind us that just as God clothes the lilies of the field in beauty and splendor, he also provides faithfully for his people. The same Crea-

tor who tends to the flowers of spring cares for every detail of our lives. People of faith come to see that truth unfold year after year — in the budding trees, the soft blossoms, and the steady return of color after winter's gray. God's reliability is woven into creation itself. As poet Adeline Whitney once wrote:  
*God does not send strange*

*flowers every year,  
When the Spring wind blows  
o'er the pleasant places,  
The same dear things lift up  
the same fair faces,  
The violet is here.*

Each spring, those familiar blooms whisper the same promise: God is faithful still.

## AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Approved Minutes

January 17, 2026



Members present: Kurt Hammar, Heather Hammar, Brian Hammar, Mike Barnes, Jim Carmody, and Becky Miller, with guest Terry Marckwardt.

The meeting was called to order at 10:21 am by Becky.

Devotion was given by Heather.

The agenda was approved with added items, a motion was made by Mike, with support from Jim, motion carried.

The minutes were approved from November 16, with no meeting in December, a motion was made by Kurt with support from Mike, motion carried.

November and December's Treasurer and financial secretary reports were accepted and approved with a motion from Mike, and support from Brian, Motion carried.

Communications: A Thank you from uplift was presented for a private donation. Angela also sent a Thank you for her Christmas gift and another great year.

Old Business:

1. Snow is still being removed around the church.
2. Calling off church with discussion through the council and using the call chain is working well.
3. Having the doors locked after the first lesson is started is working well.
4. Mike is working on getting a new Microphone for pastor.

New Business:

1. Becky and Mike answered questions for Church Mutual (insurance).
2. Pastor has offered to do a bible study during Lent, date TBD.
3. Discussion was had about induction of new members.

With no further the meeting was adjourned with the Lords Prayer.

Next meeting TBA with devotions given by Brian.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Heather Hammar

There was no WELCA meeting in February. Approved minutes from the November 2025, meeting will be published in the April 2026, MESSENGER.



## When Life Needs a Little Wind

Botanists say that trees need the powerful March winds to flex their trunks and main branches, so that the sap is drawn up to nourish the budding leaves.

Perhaps we need the gales of life in the same way, though we dislike enduring them. A blustery period in our fortunes is often the prelude to a new spring of life and health, success and happiness, when we keep steadfast in faith and look to the good in spite of appearances.

—Jane Truax

## Lighthearted blessings

- May the hinges of your friendship never grow rusty.
- May the luck of the Irish lead to happiest heights and the highway you travel be lined with green lights.
- As you slide down the banister of life, may the splinters never point the wrong way.
- May you be in heaven a full half-hour before the devil knows you're dead!
- May good luck be your friend in whatever you do, and may trouble be always a stranger to you.
- May the good saints protect you and bless you today, and may troubles ignore you each step of the way.



## The comfort connection

Amid suffering, we might feel alone and wonder what good can come of it. But later we may discover ourselves equipped to serve precisely because of what we experienced.

Writer and civil rights activist James Baldwin stated: "You think your pain and heartbreak are unprecedented ... but then you read. [Books] taught me that the things that tormented me the most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive or who had ever been alive." Whether through books or direct human interaction, we often learn that our suffering connects us to other people and that our pain gains meaning by moving us to support someone else who's hurting.

Paul writes of such connection: "Praise be to ... the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, NIV). May you share the comfort you have received from God with others in pain. As a bonus, along the way you'll realize you're not — and never have been — alone.

### Church Mission Statement

*"We are called through Jesus the Christ to nurture spiritual growth, welcome all into worship and serve the needs of others."*

### Northwest Osceola Food Pantry

Each month for our Fourth Sunday Food Pantry collection, a different item will be collected. For the month of February the item was cereal and 54 boxes were donated! For the month of March, we will be collecting spaghetti sauce. Any size or brand will be appreciated. As always, if you are unable to shop, shopping can be done for you. Please talk with Jan if you need shopping help.



**Welcome  
Our New  
Members**

### We're glad you're here!

On February 8th we were pleased to welcome new member, Ron Curtis to our church family.



### Lessons From A Little Voice

A woman invited several guests over for dinner. When everyone gathered around the table, she turned to her 6-year-old daughter and asked, "Would you like to say the blessing?"

"I don't know what to say," the little girl replied.

Her mother smiled. "Just say what you hear Mommy say."

The child bowed her head and prayed sincerely, "Dear Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"



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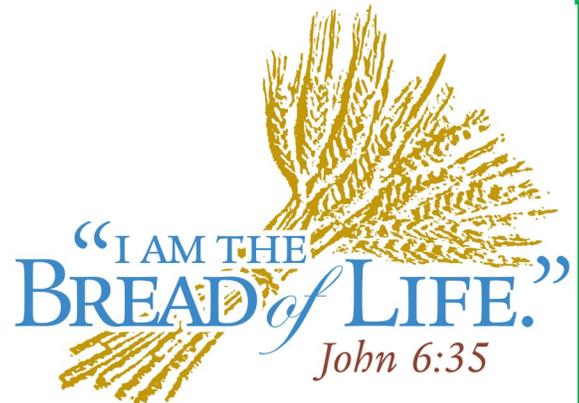
pile of crumbs grew as I continued to offer morsels of bread to my congregation.

The pastoral act of sharing, the bread; the broken body of Jesus, is dear to my heart. It's always a very special moment in the service, the time when we all commune with each other. Unfortunately, that morning I completely lost my focus. I was more concerned with trying to deal with pieces of bread that kept disintegrating into crumbs. After the service the mystery of the strange communion bread was solved. It was a simple mistake. A loaf of sweet bread was accidentally used instead of our regular communion bread.

Reflecting back, it's important to remember that as Lutherans we believe that the bread and the wine are the very body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. And while we have created all kinds of rules about what kind of bread and wine should be used (in seminary I heard arguments about whether or not tomato juice can be used instead of wine) it's important to know that God cares much more about our hearts than ingredients. And so, Sunday's sweet bread really was the body of Christ. And, despite my initial distress, I can restate my long-held assertion that "there's no such things as mistakes in worship."

Peace and Blessings,

*Pastor Sharon*



# CHURCH



# COUNCIL

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Becky Miller	231-920-7883	beckymiller81@live.com
Vice-President	Heather Hammar	231-629-2359	heather.hammar@gmail.com
Secretary	Julie Seguin	231-878-3119	jkseguin@gmail.com
Treasurer	Terry Marckwardt	231-872-0149	etmarck@sbcglobal.net
Members:	Michael Barnes	231-884-7128	birdhunterup@gmail.com
	Jim Carmody	231-288-0731	sjcarmody85@yahoo.com
	Brian Hammar	231-920-4087	bhammar@att.net
	Kurt Hammar	231-578-1153	heatherhammar1@gmail.com

## March 2026 Assisting Ministers

Date	Projector Operator	Communion Assistant	Communion Preparer	Greeters/ Open/ Close Church	Lector/ Prayer Leader	Tellers	Coffee Hour Host
March 1	Becky Miller	Sue Carmody	Sue & George Klingler	Kurt & Heather Hammar	Jim Carmody	George Klingler	Becky Miller
March 8					Harvey Miller		
March 15	Julie Seguin					Julie Seguin	
March 22					Harvey Miller		
March 29 Food Pantry Sunday							



Prayer  
LIST

**PRAYER CONCERNS:** Pat O; Amanda; Jeanette Otberg; Kathy Tuttle; the Family of Jim Claucherty; Byers Family; Jaydon; Carlton; Ron & Candy Karr; Anissa; Men and women serving in the military – Ian Little.

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

- *Food Pantry, March 2, 2026 9-11am*
- *World Day of Prayer, March 6, 2026*
- *Daylight saving time begins, March 8, 2026*
- *Council Meeting, March 15, 2026 10:15am*
- *Food Pantry, February 16, 2026 9-11am*
- *WELCA Meeting, March 17, 2026 10:30am*
- *St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2026*
- *First day of spring, March 20, 2026*
- *Holy Week, March 29-April 5, 2026*
- *Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29, 2026*
- *Food Pantry Sunday, March 29, 2026 –donations due*
- *Deadline for April Messenger, March 30, 2026*



### Happy Birthday!

Megan Hammar – March 7  
 Ruth Hammar – March 19  
 Terry Marckwardt – March 24  
 Jan Marckwardt – March 25  
 Becky Miller – March 28  
 Kate King – March 30  
 George Klingler – March 30



### Happy Anniversary

Carlton and Shelby Plyler – March 6

### God in my hands

When I was ready to give up on the Church, it was the sacraments that pulled me back.

When my faith had become little more than an abstraction, a set of propositions to be affirmed or denied, the tangible, tactile nature of the sacraments invited me to touch, smell, taste, hear, and see God in the stuff of everyday life again. They got God out of my head and into my hands. They reminded me that Christianity isn't meant to simply be believed; it's meant to be lived, shared, eaten, spoken, and enacted in the presence of other people. They reminded me that, try as I may, I can't be a Christian on my own.



### Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

9am - 1pm

e-mail: [azlcp@att.net](mailto:azlcp@att.net)

—Rachel Held Evans



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*Please kindly deliver to:*



# March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Food Pantry 9-11am	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Council Meeting 10:15am	16 Food Pantry 9-11am	17 WELCA 10:30am St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 First Day of Spring	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Palm Sunday Food Pantry Sunday	30	31				