

# AMERICAN LUTHERAN NEWS

## JANUARY 2025

American Lutheran Church, 500 Church Drive, Rantoul, IL 61866  
Church Phone: (217) 893-4550    [www.alc-rantoul.org](http://www.alc-rantoul.org)

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Grace and Peace to you all, Merry Christmas  
and a happy New Year,



I'm overjoyed to be writing this first newsletter article. The opportunity to serve as Pastor at American Lutheran Church is a great blessing to my family and me. It seems fitting to use this first article as an opportunity to tell you all a little about myself so that we can get to know each other easier.

Most of you have seen my biography in different forms during the call process. To recap, I grew up in Benton, Illinois where most of my family are from and my parents still live. I have one sister named Hannah who is two years younger than me. We were home-schooled until my sophomore year of high school. I started discerning a call to ministry at the age of 14 and began to study on my own. I met my mentor (and now father-in-law) Rev. Preston Foster on a spiritual retreat and started studying Lutheran Theology with him. I graduated from Benton Consolidated High School in 2016 and began my undergraduate work at Rend Lake College. Just before graduating with an AA in Special Education, I changed my major and transferred to The Institute of Lutheran Theology's (ILT) Christ College. During that time, I worked in a couple different hardware stores to pay for my classes which also helped me learn some great skills. I earned a Pastoral Ministry Certificate in 2019 and graduate with my B.A. Ministry in 2022. I will complete my Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from ILT's Christ School of Theology in May of 2025. I served Trinity Lutheran Church (Shumway, IL) at the request of General Secretary Mark Chavez from 2019 until 2022. Because of this service, I was only required to do a six-month internship with Trinity and St. John's (Shelbyville, IL) two-point parish from June to December of 2022. After completing that internship, I served St. John Lutheran Church (Metropolis, IL) with special permission from the NALC from 2023 until December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2024. I began discerning for my first call in March of 2024 and accepted the call to serve ALC on December 12<sup>th</sup>.

My wife Kristin and I met when on a church retreat in 2014. After a long friendship, we started dating in 2017 and were married August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020. She is a Board-Certified Music Therapist with a M.A. Music Therapy from St. Mary of the Woods College in Terre Haute Indiana. We adopted our dog Link (named for the main character in the video game The Legend of Zelda) in 2021. Our son, Asher, was born May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and has been a joy to get to know. Our little family enjoys

making music, playing board games, building our family Lego collection, and walking.

Here are a couple facts about myself: I've never been much of an athlete. I've always preferred art and music. I play guitar and ukulele, and I can sing. I played trumpet in my high school marching band and was voted most musical in my class (although Kristin is much more skilled than I am). I'm an avid reader and chess player. I also enjoy wood working and cooking.

My favorite part of being a pastor is teaching. My favorite books of the Bible are Ecclesiastes, Galatians, and the Gospel according to St. Luke.

I look forward to getting to know all of you going forward. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or needs.

Your servant in Christ,  
Pastor Aaron M. Dawson

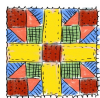


# ANNOUNCEMENTS



**CHURCH OFFICE** will be closed on Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, and Wednesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>. The church office will also be closed on Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

**UNDECORATING OF THE CHURCH** will take place on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, immediately following the Worship Service.



**QUILTERS** will resume meeting on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, at 12:30 p.m. in the Sewing Room. Please join them if you are able.

**2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES** are available to pick-up in the Narthex until Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup>. After this date, they will be available to pick-up in the church office. If you would like envelopes and none have been provided, please contact Judy Peck in the church office.



**BLOOD DRIVE** The Rantoul Community Blood Drive will be held at American Lutheran Church on Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. in the Youth Hall. Please note the new time.

**ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2024** are due to the church office by Friday, January 17<sup>th</sup>.

**LOOKING AHEAD** The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held immediately following the 9:00 a.m. Worship Service on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to attend.

**PORTALS OF PRAYER** The first quarter Portals of Prayer (January-March) are available to pick up in the Narthex and outside of the church office.

**STUDENT CLOTHING DONATIONS** We are continuing to partner with Northview Grade School collecting gently used clothing, and new socks, underwear and shoes for children ages Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade (size 5T to Men's & Women's size small). A tub is located in the Narthex for donations.



**WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP & PRAYER MEETING** for the call of a pastor began in August 2022. Now that we have a called pastor, these meetings will no longer be occurring. Thank you to all who faithfully attended the fellowship meals and prayer service whether you were a "regular" or attended periodically. Your endurance has enabled relationships to grow as we have eaten and prayed together with faith for a common need for our congregation. We know people prayed at home in private, too. All prayers for the call of a pastor are greatly appreciated. May we all now pray for the one whom the Lord has sent to us that he would serve the Lord diligently with the passion of bond-servants who have prepared the way for him and with compassion for all the believers he serves. And, please, let us all remember to thank our Lord and Savior for answering our prayers for a called pastor.



I would like to invite the women of our church to join me in a 7-Session Bible Study by Jennifer Rothschild, entitled Heaven: When Faith Becomes Sight. In this 7-session video-based study, you'll explore the subject of Heaven from a biblical perspective. Jennifer will help you separate what's true about Heaven from what's based on legend, media depictions, and hopeful guesses.

As you walk through the study, you'll not only gain a deeper understanding of what God has prepared for His children, but also learn how to live with confidence today as you look forward to the glorious unending that awaits. Don't just wonder about Heaven—embrace it with a faith that turns anticipation into excitement and peace.

Starting on Wednesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will meet at 1:00 p.m. in the Bible Study Room and begin our exploration of the subject of Heaven. Please contact Deanne Rosenbeck by January 6<sup>th</sup>, so that your study book of Heaven can be ordered. The cost will be \$19. You can call the office, text Deanne Rosenbeck at 217-621-8816 or by email at [dwattjes@hotmail.com](mailto:d wattjes@hotmail.com) to register for class.

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Thank  
You

**TO:**

Everyone that helped decorate the church for the Christmas season.  
We couldn't do it without you!

**FROM:**

Joyce Higgins... for all of the cards and visits I've received while at Accolade in Paxton and now at Holly Brook in Gibson City. I am very thankful for my church family.

Anita Valentine & Family...for all of the well-wishes, prayers and cards since Ted's passing. They have been truly appreciated.

## CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS



### **2024 Council**

President...*John Lux*  
Vice President...*J.R. Sipes*  
Secretary...*Mitch Suits*

*Devin Cox*-Building;  
*Marleen Peavler*-Preschool;  
*Deanne Rosenbeck*-  
Chairman/Outreach;  
*Shirley Friemel*-  
Ushers/Worship Stewards;  
*Linda Kirk*-HR;  
*Ann Price*-Sunday School;  
*Joyce Holland*-  
Youth/Confirmation;  
*Ron Howe*-Worship/Music;  
*Lois Sjoken*-Grounds.

### **CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**NOVEMBER 19, 2024**

Call to order at 6:55 p.m. with opening prayer by DeAnn McMorris. Guest speaker, Stacey Albers, Chairperson of Call Committee. The call committee has recommended we put a call in for Aaron Dawson as our new pastor. Questions were asked and answered by some council members. Additional Agenda Items and Approval of Agenda – Motion by Shirley Friemel to approve agenda, second by Linda Kirk. Motion carried. The council unanimously accepted the recommendation from the call committee. Motion was made by Ron Howe, seconded by Lois Sjoken to hold a congregational meeting on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, to call Aaron Dawson to be the pastor at American Lutheran Church. Motion carried. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes – Motion to approve by Deanne Rosenbeck, second by Marleen Peavler. Motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report/Financial Committee Report**

DeAnn McMorris reported that at the 84% timeline of our budget, we have used 64% of it. She said we need to get projects completed, billed and submitted before the year end. New phone system

installed and working well, new emergency lights and signs have been installed. Waiting on equipment for internet installation for parsonage. Seeking quotes for insurance as we will be getting a \$6000 dollar increase from current insurance company. Revenue right now is not meeting expenditures, but this is usually made up in the month of December. Approval was given to DeAnn to use the church bus for the Rantoul Christmas parade representing the Canteen Run.

### **Pastoral Acts**

Funeral for Shorty Baugher on November 6<sup>th</sup> officiated by Pastor Deb Domeier.

### **Ministry Team Report**

Reports available upon request.

### **Old Business**

- a. Sound System Update – Still working through some problems.
- b. Gutter Cleaning – Recommend going with Roseman Lawn Care.
- c. Flooring Project – Still working out a few installation problems.
- d. Lights in Narthex – Have been purchased. Yet to be installed.

### **New Business**

- a. Selecting new council members for consideration.
- b. Parsonage – Painting in progress. J.R. Sipes is handling updates in kitchen. Fridge, stove, dishwasher, garbage disposal – total project not to exceed \$15,000. Motion by Deanne Rosenbeck, second by Ron Howe. Motion carried.
- c. New church projector tabled until new budget year.

Motion to adjourn by Ron Howe, second by Devin Cox, motion carried. Adjourned at 8:48 p.m. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

## **BAPTISMS**

December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Philip James Lehmann

John William Lehmann

Sons of Matthew & Heather Lehmann  
Grandsons of Pastor Jim & Bev Lehmann

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## **PRAYERS TO THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY**



Jon Stiebner (son/Synda Miller); Alex Short; Brandon Elrod (grandson/Elfrieda West); Kasey Fenimore (nephew/Bill & Jody Schlueter); Brian Griswold (son/Phillip Griswold); Levi Loschen (grandson/Luella Loschen); Ryan Falletti; Riley Falletti.

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### **STUDENT CLOTHING**

### **DONATIONS**

We are collecting gently used clothing, new socks, underwear and shoes for children ages Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade -size 5T to Men's & Women's size small for Northview Grade School. Donations are to be placed in the tub located in the Narthex.

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O Lord, let my  
*New Year's resolution*  
be to  
**follow you**  
**more closely**  
and to  
**trust in your**  
*loving guidance.*

# PRAYER list

John Keith; Dave Amborn (brother-in-law/Karen Flessner); Pen Pendleton; Denny Doyle; Pastor Barb Busboom; Rodney Larkin (husband/Kaylee (Sleigh) Larkin); Rich Friemel; Geraldine Gorecki (sister/Joyce Williamson); Lee Briggs (friend/Reggie & Mary Peters); Debbi Dietz; Carla Adkins (friend/Joyce Williamson); Kim Wyre; Jessica Hawn (daughter/Rob & Kim Wyre); Earl Smith; Gabbi Reynolds (friend/Tome's); Ben Moser; William Benton (father/Phillip Benton); Steve Ritchie (friend/J.R. & Sondra Sipes); Sharon Loeh (friend/Paul & Linda Keith); Mary Mallicoat (mother-in-law/Earl Smith); Nick Shepherd (brother/Rhonda Keith); Joyce Keith; Bob & Jenny Hobby (cousins/Keith Family); Merrill Wattjes; Michael Markarian (brother/Joyce Williamson); Joan Percival; Joyce Williamson.

### **NURSING HOMES/ASSISTED LIVING:**

Bridle Brook: Keith Dohleman. Gilman Heritage Health: Dave & Loretta Overholt. Goldwater Care (Gibson City): Ruth Lutz. Holly Brook (Gibson City): Joyce Higgins. Holly Brook (Rantoul): Genet Dixon; Joan Mathis. Piatt Co. Nursing Home (Monticello): Rita Buenting.

# January

## BIRTHDAYS

Travis Dunn	1/1	Devin Cox	1/18
Travis Flesner	1/5	Justin Kaiser	1/21
Evynn Hodson	1/5	Connor Suits	1/21
Braxton Holland	1/5	Logan Suits	1/21
Tom Edwards	1/7	Jared Motley	1/23
Jeremy Motley	1/10	Matt McClain	1/26
Emily Cheek	1/12	Gene Elliott	1/27
Anne Long	1/12	Leslie Lux	1/27
Deanne Rosenbeck	1/12	Roger Mathews	1/28
John Zonfrilli	1/15	DaNora Kaiser	1/29
Jeannette Arbuckle	1/18	Linda Keith	1/31



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500 Church Drive  
Rantoul, IL 61866

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**TO:**



Youtube Channel: Rantoul, IL - American Lutheran Church (ALC)

**Pastor Aaron Dawson**  
Senior Pastor

**Nikki Foss**  
Office Manager  
[amluthoffice@gmail.com](mailto:amluthoffice@gmail.com)

**Logan Bushman**  
Preschool Director - (217) 893-8773  
[preschoolatalc@gmail.com](mailto:preschoolatalc@gmail.com)

Worship Service -  
Sunday Mornings at 9:00 a.m.  
followed by Sunday School  
and Women's Bible Study.

**ALC is Christ-centered by emphasizing teaching, worship and prayer  
as we strive toward spiritual growth.**