

# AMERICAN LUTHERAN NEWS

**JANUARY 2026**

American Lutheran Church, 500 Church Drive, Rantoul, IL 61866  
Church Phone: (217) 893-4550    Pastor Aaron's Phone: (618) 200-0352  
Website: [www.alc-rantoul.org](http://www.alc-rantoul.org)

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Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Happy New Year! As we enter a new calendar year, I'm sure many of you are considering the New Year's resolutions you've made. It is good to set goals and hopes for the year. Even so, our expectations should always be tempered by prayer and discernment.

Luther's explanation of the Lord's prayer states, "God's kingdom surely comes without our praying for it, but we pray in this petition that it may also come among us." When we focus our attention on God's will for our lives we enjoy the privilege of participating in his kingdom on earth. Discerning God's will can be tricky. Many people fear doing the wrong thing and end up doing nothing, but that is how satan wins. I have personally struggled with this kind of fear. Proper discernment is possible through the Word of God, the guidance of your Pastor, and the help of your brothers and sisters in Christ. Consider these two questions as starting guidelines when discerning what God is calling you to do:

- 1) What talents, gifts, and time has God given you?
- 2) How can you use them for the service of your neighbor?

Over the next year, my resolution is to be in prayer about what God's will for our congregation is. Who is ALC's neighbor? What talents, gifts and time has God given us as a congregation? How can we use those for the service of our neighbors in Rantoul, Champaign county, and the world? I ask you to join me in prayer and discernment. If you have ideas or want to discuss some gift the church has, please reach out.

One more thing. As I look back over my first year here at ALC and my first year of ordained ministry, I am struck by how blessed I am to be your pastor. Kristin and Asher and I have been welcomed and made part of this Church family. Thank you for your support and Grace this first year. God has done amazing things and we look forward to many more years of partnership serving the will of God.

If you have any questions, concerns, or pastoral care needs, please do not hesitate to call.

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Aaron M. Dawson*

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**



**CHURCH OFFICE** will be closed on Thursday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, for New Year's Day. The church office will also be closed on Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

**UNDECORATING OF THE CHURCH** will take place on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, immediately following the Worship Service.

**QUILTERS** will resume meeting on Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, at 12:30 p.m. in the Sewing Room. Please join them if you are able.



**EPIPHANY SERVICE** will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, in the Chapel.

**2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES** are available to pick-up in the Narthex until January 11<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 ImpactLife Blood Drive will be held at American Lutheran Church on Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, from 11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. in the ALC Youth Hall.

**ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2025** are due to the church office by Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>.

**LOOKING AHEAD** The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held immediately following the 9:00 a.m. Worship Service on Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to attend.

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



## **TO:**

Everyone that made the float for the Christmas Parade a huge success. 300 fliers with candy canes were passed out by Deanne Rosenbeck, Pam Cheek, and Sandy Mortweet. Preschool students and teachers rode on the float. Special thanks goes to Matt & Carson McClain and Jack Flesner for decorating the float, J.R. Sipes for the use of his trailer, Gary Rosenbeck for pulling the float and Ricky Wolken for the use of his generator for the lights on the float. A great time was had by all!

## **FROM:**

**The Family of Clarence Stanfill...** Thank you for all of the thoughts, prayers, and other expressions of sympathy shown to us following Clarence's passing. God Bless you all.

**Deanne Rosenbeck...** I just want to thank all the ladies that attended our first WNALC Holiday Ornament Exchange. We enjoyed great food, friendship, laughs and wonderful ornaments. We had plenty of discussion for other possible ideas for the women of our congregation for activities. Stay tuned!!



# JANUARY

## newsletter



## ALC PRESCHOOL :

These last few months have flown by, and the preschoolers had so much fun in the fall! We had our Christmas program on December 19th, and the children were so amazing! Santa stopped by for pictures and the Grinch came and stole the gifts.

We caught the Grinch out front and Thanks to the Rantoul Police Department we received all our gifts back! We ended the year with a Christmas party and reindeer games! One of the games the children wrapped Sandra up like a Christmas tree. We are excited to see what next year brings!



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 12/25-1/4 - No School
- 1/5/26 - First day back
- 1/28/26 Anita Purves nature center visits and discusses winter animals
- Library Visit
- Closed 1/19/26



## PROPOSED NEW RECIPIENTS FOR 2026 BENEVOLENCE:



### **India Transformed!**

India Transformed (IT!) is celebrating over 30 years as a nonprofit organization empowering the people of India. IT! raises support for programs in India that transform lives spiritually, socially and economically. Using this holistic approach, they have three programs that educate children to succeed, train women to support their families and raise up community leaders through discipleship training that inspires others. They serve all people in India regardless of caste, religion, gender or creed. The Children's Program provides access to Christian education which provides them with uniforms, school supplies, nutritious food and clothing. The ARISE! The Women's Empowerment Program not only teaches literacy using Scripture, but sponsorship provides a woman with tailoring skills that in six months will lead to gainful employment that can support her family. The Community Transformation Program is a two year mission and field based training program that teaches disciples how to effectively reach out to their community. They provide spiritual growth and administer to the needs of people. In addition, they conduct health and hygiene awareness classes, provide business marketing training to empower entrepreneurs, and offer adult literacy training that builds confidence and leads to a higher wage. The goal is to economically empower these people to establish and sustain a community center for transformation. IT! changes lives with an eternal perspective and entire communities to have hope for a better future.



### **Malawi Orphan Care Project**

The Malawi Orphan Care Project exists to improve the lives of orphaned and at risk children and their caregivers in Malawi. Their vision is to have healthy, self-sustaining communities throughout Malawi. The Malawi Orphan Care Project works in partnership with community leaders in Malawi to address the physical, spiritual, economic and relational needs of the orphans and their caregivers. Specific ministry and focus areas include: feeding program, evangelism, the sports program, high school scholarships, elementary school fees, building infrastructure, creating small businesses, Days for Girls Enterprise.



### **Shepherd's Canyon Retreat**

Pain and suffering are unfortunate, yet critical components common to all who seek services at Shepherd's Canyon Retreat. Suffering, of course, accompanies life and is especially true for those who serve in the Church. People come to Shepherd's Canyon Retreat with complaints of overwhelming personal, marital, and congregational conflicts, ministry burnout, depression, marital discord, infidelity, and struggles with addictive behavior. As is common for us all, when we are in physical or emotional pain, we attempt to remove ourselves from it as quickly as possible. At Shepherd's Canyon Retreat, while we strive to help people alleviate their suffering, we also strongly encourage them to both describe their agony and, even more importantly, to learn from it. A useful scriptural passage regarding this difficult issue is Romans 5:3-5: "...we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." This scripture makes it clear: suffering, while not to be sought after, is, nevertheless, purposeful and has the enormous potential to deepen our relationship with God and with each other. This is at the heart of what occurs at Shepherd's Canyon Retreat.

# **CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS**



## **2025 Council**

President...*J.R. Sipes*  
Vice President...*Mitch Suits*  
Secretary...*Terry Doyle*

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

## **CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**NOVEMBER 18, 2025**

Meeting called to order at 7:10 p.m.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Included. 68% of the budget had been used to date pending payment for the flooring. Money requests are encouraged to be submitted prior to the new budget being finalized so they can be factored in. A meeting was held with Edward Jones to update our information. The Gifford account will be closed by 12/31/25.

### **Ministry Reports**

- a. Worship & Music – Included.
- b. Ushers & Worship Stewards – Included.
- c. Sunday School – The Intergenerational Sunday School session was well received.
- d. Youth – Included.
- e. Pre-School – Included. Will be needing help repairing damaged walls in the SW room.
- f. Human Resources – Nothing to report.
- g. Groundskeeping – Included.
- h. Building – Included.
- i. Outreach/Benevolence – Included.

### **Disaster Relief**

Inventory is about 60% capacity.

**Elders's/Foundation** – Nothing to report.

### **Old Business**

- a. The Issues noted in the Youth Hall are close to being addressed and completed.
- b. The Constitution Amendment regarding the Audit process - in the works.
- c. Sanctuary Pews condition/repairs - evaluations and options are in the works.
- d. Council Nominating Committee has obtained commitments for each vacancy.

### **New Business**

- a. Discussion was presented concerning the revision of the Pre-School Constitution.

**Pastor's Report** – Included.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

**PRAYERS TO THOSE  
SERVING IN THE MILITARY**

**PRAY FOR OUR** Jon Stiebner  
 (son/Synda Miller);  
**MILITARY** Alex Short; Brandon  
Elrod (grandson/Elfrieda West);  
Kasey Fenimore (nephew/Bill & Jody  
Schlueter); Levi Loschen  
(grandson/Luella Loschen); Ryan  
Falletti; Riley Falletti; Eli Baker  
(grandson/Gary & Lois Sjoken).

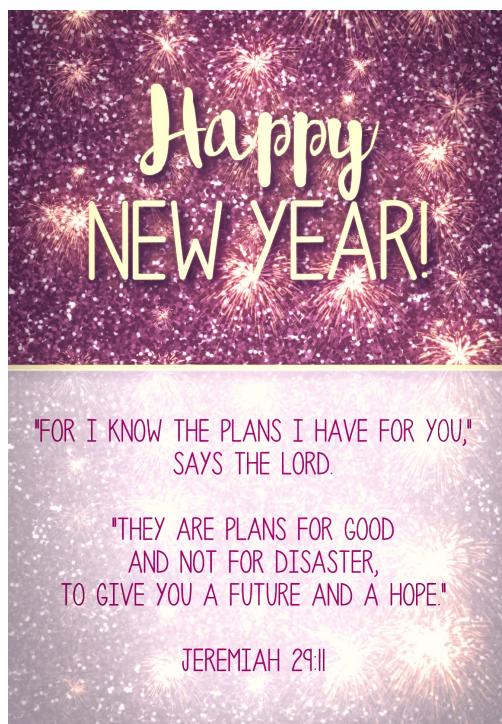
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**SYMPATHY IS EXTENDED TO:**

...Martha Stanfill & family for the loss  
of her husband, Clarence, on  
November 30<sup>th</sup>.

 IN OUR   
*Thoughts and Prayers*

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**PRAYER**  
*list...*

Kay Thomas (sister/Emlly Deal); Samuel Day  
(son/Kayla Pilarski & Anthony Day); Kayla Pilarski;  
Sondra Sipes; Rich Friemel; Barb Corbly; Jeff Holsinger  
(brother-in-law/Janie Howe); Ethan Kempfer  
(great-nephew/Terry Doyle); Marty Mirocha  
(friend/J.R. & Sondra Sipes); Melvina Heap; Breen  
Sipes (daughter-in-law/J.R. & Sondra Sipes); Paul  
Albers (brother/Judy Quinlan); Karen Bruns; Ray Hoff  
(stepfather-in-law/Allison Moser); Daniel Rodriguez  
(father/Allison Moser); Kim Wyre; Annette Carlson;  
Marlys Morris; Wilma Suits (sister/Sue Coffin); Brian  
Dietz; Roberta Arthur; Steve Schluter; Eugene Schmidt  
(brother/Dave & Peggy Schmidt); Tracie Sisneros  
(sister/Sean O'Donnell); Glenn Behnke; John Keith;  
Pen Pendleton; Denny Doyle; Rodney Larkin  
(husband/Kaylee (Sleigh) Larkin); Geraldine Gorecki  
(sister/Joyce Williamson); Lee Briggs (friend/Reggie &  
Mary Peters); Carla Adkins (friend/Joyce Williamson);  
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 Lohen  
(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:** Accolade  
(Paxton-Fulton St.): Janet Johnson. Bridle Brook:  
Keith Dohleman. Holly Brook (Rantoul): LouAnn  
Baughner; Pastor Barb Busboom; Genet Dixon; Luella  
Loschen; Joan Mathis; Martha Stanfill. Prairieview  
Lutheran Home (Danforth): Dave & Loretta Overholt.

# January

## BIRTHDAYS

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



**AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
500 Church Drive  
Rantoul, IL 61866

**NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION**  
**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**  
Rantoul, IL 61866

**Return Service Requested**

**Permit No. 17**



**TO:**



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

**Pastor Aaron Dawson**  
Senior Pastor  
[rev.daws25@gmail.com](mailto:rev.daws25@gmail.com)

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

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

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

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

# JANUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS SCHEDULE

|                | <b>Worship<br/>Stewards</b> | <b>Ushers*</b>                                | <b>Table Guild</b>        | <b>Greeters</b>                   | <b>Lectors</b>       | <b>Prayers</b>    | <b>Acolytes</b>                 |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>1/4/26</b>  | Midge<br>Seim               | David Hulse<br>Donna Hustedt<br>Wendy Watkins | Terri Kirby<br>Midge Seim | Mary Peters<br>Katie Holland      | Lorraine<br>McElwain | Jim<br>Cheek      | Connor Suits<br>Eli Schluter    |
| <b>1/11/26</b> | Sheila<br>Sherman           | Stan Wolken<br>Logan Suits<br>Aubrie Albers   |                           | Lloyd Schluter<br>Connor Suits    | Aubrie<br>Albers     | Joyce<br>Holland  | Daphnie Albers<br>Owen Schluter |
| <b>1/18/26</b> | Ron<br>Howe                 | Sam & Joyce<br>Holland<br>Katie Holland       |                           | Sheila Sherman<br>Sue Coffin      | Chrissie<br>Hall     | Justin<br>Kaiser  | Carson McClain<br>Jack Flesner  |
| <b>1/25/26</b> | Lloyd<br>Schluter           | Rod & Sandy<br>Heiser<br>Connor Suits         |                           | Shirley Friemel<br>DeAnn McMorris | Sean<br>O'Donnell    | Sheila<br>Sherman | Ivie Albers<br>Kali Schluter    |

**\*Ushers: Please be at the church by 8:30 a.m. to pass out bulletins.**