

# CHURCH CONNECTIONS

*Messages for God's People*

Morgan United Methodist | St. John's Lutheran | St. Luke's Lutheran  
on the web at [luthadist.webstarts.com](http://luthadist.webstarts.com) and [facebook.com/stjohnmorgan](https://facebook.com/stjohnmorgan)

## Worship Times

Worship times for February, March and April are:

8:15 St. John's

9:30 MUMC

11:00 St. Luke's

## Lent Starting March 5th

This year Lent will begin later than it does most of the time. Ash Wednesday will be March 5th and Easter Sunday will be April 20th. Looking ahead to our Wednesday Lenten Worship schedule the Worship places will be as follows:

March 5 St. Luke's Ash Wednesday

March 12 St. John's

March 19 MUMC

March 26 St. Luke's

April 2 St. John's

April 9 MUMC

April 17 St. Luke's Maundy Thursday

April 18 St. John's Good Friday

All worships will begin at 7:00 PM.

## Council Meetings

St. Luke's council is scheduled to meet Tuesday, February 11th, at 7:00 PM.

## Dates for Communion

St. John's and St. Luke's will celebrate Communion February 2nd and 16th. Morgan United Methodist will gather at the Lord's Supper on February 2nd.

## Colors on the Altar

For all of the month of February we are in the season after Epiphany, sometimes just called the Season of Epiphany. Either way this season of the church is all about Jesus revealing who he is and his revealing God's presence among us. Green covers the altars as a sign of growth in faith as God is revealed.

## Confirmation Classes In February

Confirmation class will be held on February 5th in the St. John's basement beginning at 6:30. February 19th will be the snow day if needed.

## Bible Studies

We will have Bible Study at Gil-Mor Haven beginning at 1:45 on Thursdays in February, the 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th. All are welcome. Men's Bible Study will meet on Tuesday, February 4th at 7:30 in the basement of St. John's.

## Ushers for February

**Morgan United Methodist Church:**

Brett Janke and Char Carlson

## Devos at the Depot

Join us for Devos at the Depot as we gather midweek for fellowship, and tacos if you would like. We may break into singing a few of your favorite hymns and talking together about the Gospel for the coming week and the news of the day. We meet at the Franklin Depot. We start around 6:30, or whenever you can join us, **February 18th** for this lighthearted gathering.

## Parish Birthdays & Anniversaries

Please wish these people a happy birthday and anniversary as they celebrate another year of living and loving in God's world.

### **St. Luke's**

Chris Larson 2, Nicholas Tonak 6, Jessica Lund 8, Scott Lund 11, Ron Zempel 11, Roger Reek 13, Kinsley Kuskie 13, Chris Wood 14, Kate Joennck 15, Philip Nestande 15, Samantha Riley 16, Lori Zempel 25 and Macy Kamholz 25.

### **MUMC**

Callum Carlson 6, Doris Sandmann 7, Derek Christensen 8, Curt Stokesbary 8, Shandell Sell 12, Drew Dallenbach 16 and Elliot Potter 22.

### **Anniversary:**

Bob and Monica Sandmann 24th. (1979)

### **St. John's**

Roger Voelz 7, Karissa Christensen 7, Roger Kettner 9, Shannon Hoffbeck 13, Marie Fischer 22 and Dylan Hillger 28.

## Sunday School at St. Luke's

St. Luke's Sunday School will meet from 10:00 to 10:45 on the first and third Sundays of each month. In February they will meet on Sundays the 2nd and the 16th.

## Prayer Concerns

Please continue to pray for the members of our congregations and those we know that are in need. Brent Sandmann, Raynette Hansen, Todd Sherman, Landen Grejtek, Alice Wood, Irene Landgraff, Carl Lund, Kathy Potter, Sandy Seehausen, Julie Wendinger, Dee Johnson, Glen Seifert and Curt Christensen, Dick and Jeri Forbrook, Sandy Schroeder Long, Pam Shefland, Jim Nielsen, and Dorothy Thompson.

## Email Addresses Wanted

The cost of mailing letters continues to climb and we as a parish are noticing the increase as we try to send out the *Church Connections* each month. If you are receiving this newsletter in the mail and have an email address and can save us the cost of a stamp each month that would be helpful! If you are receiving this newsletter and are not interested, please let us know that too! Please send any and all changes to addresses and emails to [prlowellk@gmail.com](mailto:prlowellk@gmail.com)

## From the Pastor's Desk

Each year I am asked by the Lutheran Churches to submit a pastor's report for their yearly annual meeting. What follows here is a reprinting of that report for wider distribution in our parish.

This year marks my tenth year here as your pastor and also ten years of the three churches working together. I continue to be grateful and filled with gratitude that I have the opportunity to serve alongside each of you in our work together in the Kingdom of God.

**From the Pastor's Desk Continued**

There is much to look back on and remember. We have had many joyous occasions celebrated; births and baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and milestone birthdays. We have also stood together and supported those in grief at the loss of many loved ones in our parish. Ten years is not that long of a period of time but it is long enough to experience many emotions filled with both joy and grief. This year we have had 2 Baptisms, 4 Confirmations and sadly, 13 funerals and burials.

We could spend much time remembering and calling to mind all of the things that have happened. There is a time and a place for that. But maybe my time in this report would be better spent looking ahead. What does the future hold? That is a big question! It might be easier and safer to start with where we are now.

There is much to celebrate. Our congregations are still vibrant places of community and caring. The communities we have built are strong and are willing to help each other and support one another in difficult times and celebrate with each other too. The three communities are willing to join each other on special occasions too. One of my favorite memories from this year is the picnic we had at the Ramsey Park in Redwood Falls. We had a large turnout for the worship and picnic. It was indeed a celebration. When we look to the future we know that these communities, the Body of Christ will continue to be strong and cared for. Thank you to all of you who continue to work in so many ways caring for each other and the Church throughout the world.

There are also things that we need to be aware of as we look to the future. In all three churches we are struggling for two things; people and money. As you come to church I know you are aware that there are just not as

many as there used to be in the pews. The sanctuary may seem mostly empty. And though it may not be as obvious, giving is just not keeping up with what it costs to operate the churches and finances are being stretched. When we look to the future, right now, it seems a little dark for our three churches in the form we have always known them. We will need to work for change in membership and giving as we head to the future.

On the monetary side I have done what I can. For 2024 I only received a small raise and in 2025 I will not receive any raise. The only change in my compensation for next year will be the change in health insurance. That means that I am receiving 84% of what is set as the minimum salary compensation by the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA. I have been given extra weeks of vacation to help make up the difference but there is only so much time you can give me.

For more people, I have three words of advice:

Invite

Invite

Invite

I can give powerful uplifting sermons but if no one is there to hear them what good are they? We can have different programs for people but if no one comes why go through the effort? The only way people are going to come into our churches is if we are willing to go out and bring them in. It takes more than asking someone to come. It takes being willing to go to their house and pick them up and actually bring them. Why? It is intimidating to walk into a place you don't know and feel comfortable. When was the last time you did something that bold? If we want more people we are the only ones that can make that happen. We have to be the ones to help others see that our doors are open and they are truly welcome.

January 2025

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**From the Pastor's Desk Continued (again)**

What does the future hold? That is partly up to us and what you are willing to do for your church and the Kingdom of God. Are you willing to boldly invite your neighbors to be part of your church? Are you willing to take the first step, go the extra mile? If so, then we will continue to grow and thrive in the Kingdom of God as we have known it. If not, then we will still be a part of the Kingdom of God but how it looks in our communities may need to change.

God's Peace,  
Pr. Lowell

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# February

## Morgan United Methodist St. John's Lutheran & St. Luke's Lutheran

2025

on the web at [luthadist.webstarts.com](http://luthadist.webstarts.com) and  
[facebook.com/stjohnmorgan](https://facebook.com/stjohnmorgan)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<u>Worship</u> 8:15 St. John's 9:30 MUMC 10:00 St. Luke's SS 11:00 St. Luke's	10:00 Chapel at Franklin restorative care	7:30 Men's Bible at St. John's	6:30 Confirmation Class at St. John's	1:45 Bible Study at Gil-Haven	Pastor's Sabbath	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<u>Worship</u> 8:15 St. John's 9:30 MUMC 11:00 St. Luke's		7:00 St. Luke's Council Meeting		1:45 Bible Study at Gil-Haven	Pastor's Sabbath	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<u>Worship</u> 8:15 St. John's 9:30 MUMC 10:00 St. Luke's SS 11:00 St. Luke's	Newsletter items due	6:30 Devos at the Depot at Franklin Depot		1:45 Bible Study at Gil-Haven	Pastor's Sabbath	
23	24	25	26	27	28	1
<u>Worship</u> 8:15 St. John's 9:30 MUMC 11:00 St. Luke's				1:45 Bible Study at Gil-Haven	Pastor's Sabbath	



February

MORGAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN OF MORGAN  
ST. LUKE LUTHERAN OF FRANKLIN

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