CELEBRATING OUR MINISTRY

CALVARY SWEDE HOME & FIRST RISING CITY

Stewardship

In the fall, many congregations turn their focus towards stewardship. Stewardship can be hard to define but also can be as simple as what we give to the church and the world. What does stewardship mean for our congregation?

Matthew 6:19-21 says: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (*NRSVue*)

Stewardship is the prayer-filled discernment of how best to utilize our God given gifts as we work together to make God's vision for the future a reality. Stewardship is not something that we boast about, but it is done because God is calling us to love and serve one another. It may be the giving of money to the church, but it also includes the gifts of time, music, teaching, serving in worship, serving coffee, being on council, volunteering in the community, and more. As the Stewardship of Life Institute (SOLI) says, "Stewardship is a journey. Like all faith disciplines, stewardship takes awareness, prayer, and practice."

In what ways do you see stewardship present at Calvary and First? In the past three years we have noticed how much your congregations do for each other and for the community both near and far. Our stewardship is a focus that we tend to do without thinking about it, because our congregations have always thought about how to serve the community. Pastor Evan and I have learned a lot about stewardship from all of you.

If you are wanting to be more involved at church, please reach out to us. Through prayerful discussion together, we can discover how your gifts can be used in our congregations.

+Peace,

Pastor Hillary Christensen

The Pumpkin Prayer—
Thanks to Luann

As I carve my pumpkin,
Help me pray this prayer:

Open my mind so I can learn about you.
Take all my sin and forgive the wrong I do
Open my eyes so your love will see,
I'm sorry for the times I've turned up my nose at what you've given to me.
Open my ears so your Word I will hear;
Open my mouth to tell others you're near.
Let your light shine in all I say and do. Amen.

Announcements

The Evangelism and Outreach Team oversees a nonperishable food and personal care item collection.

October donations go to:

Blue Valley Community Action

Donations are always welcome for the Little Food Pantries located in the county

Little Food Pantry

The pantries are checked and restocked at least every two weeks. The site in Osceola is used most often followed by the one in Stromsburg. Items that most often need replenishing are : **non-perishable fruit, mac and cheese, canned pasta, chili, packaged pasta, rice or potato side dishes, ramen, tuna and granola bars.** We continue to provide for Genesis House and Blue Valley Food pantries We are applying for a Thrivent card to help stock the Little Pantry, and we will have a food drive at the Beers and Hymns this year. We appreciate your support

Due to a rainy day in Sept. we will be doing the 2-miles of highway 39 litter pick up on Sunday, October 5 @ 4 p.m. Please meet at Monty & Cheryl Jones' home (13088 J Rd) and we'll split up from there. Please stay for fellowship and soup after the work is done.

W.E.L.C.A. News

October 19 will be a Sunday worship service of special music by a friend of Pastors – Joselyn Olivia. First of Rising City will be joining us for worship, and we will have a wonderful time of fellowship with a potluck lunch after church. Circle members are asked to bring a pot-luck dish of your choice for the noon meal that day. This can be discussed this more at the October circle meetings. Thank you for always being willing to help out!

*Service for month of October is an offering for Genesis House (monetary or tangible).

*Altar care for October will be Jean Waller. November will be Diana Johnson, and December will be Cheryl Jones and Kay Jones.

*Flowers and Cheer in October, November and December will be by Miriam circle.

*Offerings can be given at your circle meetings, mailed to Bonnie Carlson, or left in her box in the church office. Thank you.

*2026 Yearbook will need to be worked on soon, so please think about when you'd like to host, do bible study, or help with WELCA responsibilities at Swede Home. If you have ideas or suggestions for us to consider for next year, please talk to Cheryl or Bonnie. It will be nice to have options to discuss at our fall Executive Committee meeting.

*Save the Date of Sunday, December 7 for our General Meeting, hosted by Miriam. (Executive Committee will need to meet in November to discuss giving and 2026 yearbook.)

OCTOBER

October 5 @ 4 p.m. – Highway Pick Up on Hwy. 39

Ruth – 10/8 9am Penny Udey at Gathering Grounds

Miriam—10/8 10:00 am Gathering Grounds Osc

Ladies Bible Study—10/15 7:30 p.m. .at church

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." ~ Galatians 5:22

God's Peace to you,

Cheryl

Church happenings

Pastor Hillary and Pastor Evan will keep the youth group updated regarding meeting dates. They use either text or email notification.

Communion Class at First (Rising City)

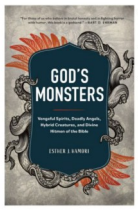
First Communion class will be November 8th at 9 AM

First Communion service will be November 9th at 8:45 AM

If you have a child that is interested please reach out to Pastors

OCTOBER BOOK STUDY

GOD'S MONSTERS



The Bible is teeming with monsters. Giants tromp through the land of milk and honey; Leviathan swims through the wine-dark sea. A stunning array of peculiar creatures, mind-altering spirits, and supernatural hitmen fill the biblical heavens, jarring in both their strangeness and their propensity for violence—especially on God's behalf.

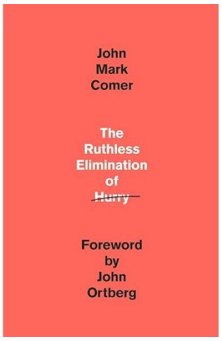
All Studies will meet at Calvary Swede Home. Mondays at 7:00 PM

NOVEMBER BOOK STUDY

THE RUTHLESS ELIMINATION OF HURRY

A spiritual guide offering practical solutions to combat the toxic effects of hurry in modern life, presenting a roadmap for emotional health and spiritual vitality through intentional slowness.

All Studies will meet at Calvary Swede Home. Mondays at 7:00 PM



Rising City News

September Council Meeting

September 14, 2025

Present: Wally and Luanne Kilgore, Lee and Cindy Lorentzen, Carla Crook, Ken Potter, Rogene McMeekin, Linda Chatelain, Pastor Evan.

Pastor Even opened the meeting.

Ken motioned that the minutes of the August meeting be approved and Rogene seconded.

Motioned carried.

Lee motioned to accepted the treasurer's report and Cindy seconded. Motioned carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Carla motioned to hold a joint service at Calvary on October 19th. Jocelyn Oliva will be leading the service. Lee seconded and motion carried. There will be no Sunday School that day.

NEW BUSINESS

Council was reminded to fill out their member interview questionnaire.

A thank you was received from Lutheran Disaster Response.

An Eakes statement was reviewed and it was decided to make the bulletin in black and white to cut the cost.

Pastor Hillary will be gone from 10/8 to 10/14.

Synod on the Road will be in Wahoo. More info to come.

Lee motioned to adjourn, and Ken seconded.

Pastor Evan closed the meeting with The Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting will be October 12.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Lorentzen

Council Secretary

UPCOMING EVENTS

Communion Class at First (Rising City)

First Communion class will be November 8th at 9 AM

First Communion service will be November 9th at 8:45 AM

If you have a child that is interested please reach out to Pastors

Calvary is hosting a coffee shop concert at the Gathering Grounds in Osceola. Jocelyn Olivia is a friend of the Pastors, and will be performing from noon to 2 pm on Saturday, October 18.

This will be open to the public, light refreshments will be furnished by Calvary. Steve will be available for his coffee and specialty drinks for you to purchase.

We hope you take the opportunity to attend, you may stay for the whole event, or come and go as you want. Our goal is to share Christian music for the community and our church

Special offering

Calvary will be taking special offerings during the months of October and December. There will be a separate offering plate at the back of the church.

In October the offering will be for the annual personal care kits that we put together for Lutheran World Relief. We do get a Thrivent card to help with these expenses.

In November the offering will be for the Christmas meals that we distribute to the area Meals on Wheels recipients and others in need. We do get a Thrivent card to help with these expenses.

Please consider a free will offering to these projects so that we are continue to fulfill God's Work with our Hands.

Calvary Lutheran Church
Nebraska Synod, ELCA
950 129th Road
Stromsburg, NE 68666
Church Phone: (402)282-1830
www.calvaryswedehomechurch.com
Email calvaryswedehomechurch@gmail.com
Facebook "Swede Home"

Every Member of the Congregation—Ministers
Andrew Adelson, Council Chair
Jenn Fjell, Council Vice Chairman
Missy Althouse, Council Secretary
Amy Harris and Janet Nielsen, Music
Linda Fuhr, Church Office Administrator
LeeAnn Willhoft, Custodian

Council Members:
Andrew Adelson, Jennifer Fjell, Dan Oquist,
Missy Althouse, Kris Udey, Randy Lott,
Jarrett Althouse, youth representative

Pastor Evan Cell Phone 402-689-5495 (text or call)
Email: evan@pastorchristensen.com

Pastor Hillary Cell Phone 402-980-1102 (text or call)
Email: hillary@pastorchristensen.com

IF you are texting or emailing a pastor, please include both pastors in the text or email

Please contact Linda Fuhr, Church Office Administrator at calvaryswedehomechurch@gmail.com or text or call 402-366-2091, If you have not done so, follow **Swede Home** on our Facebook page.

First English Lutheran Church
Nebraska Synod, ELCA
840 Butler St Rising City, NE 68658
Church Phone: (402)542-2217
Email : firstenglutheranchurchrc@gmail.com
Facebook "First Lutheran Church Rising City Nebraska
Every Member of the Congregation—Ministers
Council Chair: Wally Kilgore
Vice Chair: Ken Potter
Secretary: Cindy Lorentzen
Council Members:
Lee Lorentzen, Carla Cook, Rogene McMeekin
Luanne Kilgore, Church Office Manager

Recipes

It has been a while since we have shared a recipe in the newsletter. We thank Ben Carlson for sharing this recipe for Green Tomato Pie. He found this recipe in his grandmother's box of recipes. It is a great use for all those green tomatoes you tend to pull up and throw away at the end of summer. He baked this last year and found it tastes similar to apple pie, so don't be put off by the name of this pie! Give it a try!!

3 cups of sliced green tomatoes
1 1/3 cups of sugar
3 Tablespoons of flour
1/4 tsp salt, 3/4 tsp cinnamon
5 Tablespoons of lemon juice, 1 tsp lemon flavoring
Pastry for a 2 crust pie
2 Tablespoons of Butter
1/4 cup milk
Combine tomatoes, sugar, flour, salt, cinnamon, lemon juice and lemon flavoring.

Line a 9 inch pie pan with pastry. Pour in the filling, dot with butter and cover with top crust. Cut slits and brush with milk and sprinkle sugar on top.

Bake in a 450 degree oven for 10 minutes, then reduce temperature to 350 degrees and bake 40 minutes more

We Reach to all our faith family in prayer and celebration

Remember in your prayers

Kathi Jones
Janice Forsberg
Melissa Forsberg
June Larson
Beth Jones Wienck
Jan Wells Bachman
Carey Clauff
Bryce Anderson
Clerrisa Udey
Colby Nelson
Wayne Johnson
Tristen Cleland
Sheila Hofmann
Todd Hofmann
PR Heather

- Genesis House and Living Waters Rescue Mission, Blue Valley Action
- Houses for Health recipients.
- Bishop Scott Johnson and the Nebraska Synod staff
- Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and all ELCA congregations and members
- Brody Ienn in service to our country

To request prayers please email the church or call Linda (402-366-2091) or Cheryl (402-366-4797)

October Swede Home

Assistant Minister and Reader— Cheryl the 5th, Diana remaining of October

Ushers – Missy the 5th and 12th, Don and Linda the 19th,

Altar Care— Jean

Acolyte

Bell Ringer –

Anniversaries

October

6 Mike and Deb Cramer

10 Wendy & Kelly Shalenberg

27 Ryan and Jenn Fjell

Birthdays

October

03 C- Clayton Watts
05 C- Tamara Rowse
07 C- Andrew Adelson
08 F Cindy Lorentzen
09 C- Kent Adelson
09 C- Elaine Toline
10 C- Randy Lott
14 F Micah Steinike
18 C- Ava Ernst
18 C- Clerissa Udey
20 C- Hadley Ienn
21 C- Nate Johnson
21 C- Peter Jones
22 C- Gabe Hanquist
23 C- Hillary Christensen
24 C- Corey Watts
27 C- Yancy Krol
28 C- Rick Jones
28 C- Jaxon McCarville
31 C- Anita Haack
31 C- Marvin Larson

We thank all those who agree to help with the worship service each month. **Please let Jean Waller or Carolyn Nielsen know if you can help**

The Sign-up sheets for 2025 are on the ushers counter. Please consider when you can serve

October 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 8:45 First RC 10:30 Calvary Council following 4pm Hiway Pickup	6 7pm Book Study at Calvary	7	8 9am Ruth Circle at Gathering Grounds 7pm men's bible study	9 10am Miriam Circle at Gathering Grounds	10	11
12 8:45 First RC 10:30 Calvary	13 7pm Book Study at Calvary	14	15 7:30 pm Women's bible study at Calvary	16	17	18 Noon to 2 pm Jocelyn Olivia Christian music at Gathering Grounds
19 10:30 Joint worship with 1st RC at Calvary, special music, meal following	20 7pm Book Study at Calvary	21	22	23	24	25
26 8:45 Worship First-RC 10:30 worship at Calvary	27 7pm Book Study at Calvary	28	29	30	31	

Special thanks to Calvary-Swede Home for the use of your beautiful church and church property on August 9th. We all appreciate that you allow us to have our special reunions at the church grounds.

Our family roots date back to the beginning of the town of Swede Home as well as the beginning of the church.

You have done such an awesome job of updating and maintaining this beautiful church

Thank s again from the Carl Gustaf and Charlotte Johnson descendants.

Dear Calvary Lutheran Church

Thank you for your gift of $685 to Lutheran Disaster Response. As a church, we are empowered to love and serve our neighbors as Christ first loved us. Your gifts to the ministries of the ELCA help people feel the power and hope that flow from God's full, boundless love. This gift was designated for the flood victims of Texas this past summer.

Your Spirit-filled generosity helps families and communities reeling from disasters. No matter the disaster, no matter the need, your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response enables people to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

Thank you, you make GO's love real.

The Rev. Daniel Rift

Director, Congregational Generosity

Dear Calvary Lutheran Church

Thank you for your church's recent gift of $3,000 to Lutheran Family Services in support of LFS Dana Village gym fund. Your generosity is already making a powerful impact this supper—and we couldn't be more grateful. Because of you, new populations, veterans, and children and families who are facing difficult circumstances have hope and stability when it is needed most.

Thank you for being part of this vital work. With your continued support, we can ensure that even more individuals and families feel seen, supported, and empowered in the months ahead.

With Regards

Chris Tonniges, President and CEO

Dear Calvary

We again want to thank you for your generous gift to Mourning Hope in the amount of $500

Through the Family Grief Support Group, children are able to find hope. They may friendships with other kids who lost someone and learned healthy ways to find comfort.

Your gift brings hope to the thousands of families, adults and kids that Mourning Hope serves annually. Thank you for helping us ensure that no one has to grieve alone.

With Hope,
Carly Woythaler-Runestad, MHA

Executive Director

Meet the member

We will be featuring council members from both First -Rising and Swede Home in the future editions. This month we are featuring for our Meet the Member, Rogene McMeekin, from First-RC

Rogene grew up in Rising City, NE on a farm and attended First Lutheran Church in Rising City all my life. My husband, Bob, grew up near Osceola on a farm. I went to Rising City school for all 13 years and Bob attended Osceola Schools from Kindergarten to his Senior year.

Bob worked at local Co-Op driving semi-truck for them thru retirement.

I worked as a Secretary at Vishay in Columbus, NE and then stayed home to raise 2 boys. It was a Grand Experience to take them places and we went to ALL of their school events especially FB and Basket Ball games. Then we next were blessed with grandchildren who were good in sports. So off we went to all their games even college soccer games for our first granddaughter. She attended College of St. Mary's in Omaha through her 4 yrs of college and became an RN and now is working in the NICU dept. at Omaha Children's Hospital. Her brother is now a Construction Manager and her other brother is learning to be a plumber. We are so very proud of all of the family. Our next batch of 4 grands are in Colorado. One is in second year of college and 3 are in High School. Because they are in Colorado, we do not get to their school events like we did our first 3 Grands that grew up in Columbus, NE. Luckily we have phones, photos, etc., to keep us informed. .

For the most part we love Colorado mountains so we go there to see our 2nd Son's family in Denver. Estes Park, CO is a SUPER PLACE FOR US TO ENJOY THE MOUNTAINS. We all like the go karts, lakes, wildlife, rodeos, etc. We have traveled to Hawaii, several cruises (to Alaska, Panama Canal, and up to Nova Scotia to see lighthouses etc.) We made trips to South Dakota, Montana, Kansas, Arizona, Texas, Mexico, Switzerland. California, Florida etc. We praise God that we have had a grand time in his beautiful world. We have been blessed with 60 almost 61 (Nov. 7, 2025) years together and friends and family to travel with etc. We were married Nov. 7, 1964.

For fun and relaxation we like to play cards, watch movies, eat out (no preparation, right), go to sports games while we are able. We go to visit our friends in surrounding towns. We go to Walmart for exercise plus Bob has been able to ride a cart to get around as he has not been able to walk very far at one time. Since his Heart Procedure on Sept. 9, 2025, he seems more rested--his blood flow is much better with a new valve (from a cow.) Our Cardiologist kept giving him tests to figure out his problem. Thanks to Doctors etc. for all their knowledge to keep us all as healthy as we can be.

At church we hear the Word of God and we feel blessed . Greeting our fellow members each Sunday plus praying for those in need is very fulfilling. We are grateful for our church family and especially for Pastor Evan and Pastor Hillary, the boys too! What a blessing the family has been to us all.

PERSONAL CARE KITS

This October we will again be gathering items for the Personal Care kits for Lutheran World Relief.

LWR Kits are specifically designed to help people coping with poverty, disaster, conflict and more. Whether a kit helps someone to maintain good hygiene, care well for a newborn baby, keep education going during a crisis or learn a new vocation, LWR Kits provide dignity and hope in the direst situations.

Included in the kits are a bath sized towel, 3 bars of soap, a toothbrush, comb and nail clipper.

We will be purchasing these items in October and on Sunday, October 26th, following worship service, we will assemble and pack the kits. IF you are able to stay and help with this part of the project, we would appreciate it.

The Kits will need to be delivered to St. John's Church in Norfolk on Monday, October 27, Tuesday October 28 or Wednesday October 29. Hours for delivery are 9am to noon. There will be help to unload the kits and they will load them on a semi truck which will carry them to Minneapolis, MN.

We have done this project for several years, and hope with your help to continue this service project.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda

Council Notes

September 7 2025 Calvary

Present: Missy, Jarrett, Randy, Andrew, Kris, Jen, Pastor Evan Absent: Dan

Agenda Approved . Approved Pastor Evan and Pastor Hillary's report Approved minutes of August 10 council meeting

Old Business

Internet at Fellowship, Sanctuary, and Narthex - Andrew will order mesh extenders

Coffeehouse Concert - Saturday, October 18th at Gathering Grounds, come support

Synod "on the road" workshop at Marquette, NE Saturday, September 13th at 10am to 3pm

New Business

Parsonage updates – small projects still need done

Church insurance

Proposal from Brotherhood:

Property value $3,327,000.00 and we'll insure at 80% of value for $2,661,600.00 with $500,000.00 personal property replacement cost

Parsonage coverage at 80% of value at $330,400.00 replacement cost with $10,000.00 personal property replacement coverage

$20,000.00 deductible policy with a separate 2% deductible for hail/wind damage

Motioned: Jen Seconded: Randy Motion Carried

Tree removal proposal - Trees at the front of church need to be discussed at annual meeting

Special Music October 19th

Sunday service plans - Potluck meal and invite First Rising City with Joint council meeting following meal

Special music - Christmas concert Saturday, December 6th at 3 pm with Brad Ramp. This is open to public

Christmas Eve Service time - 10:30 pm

November 7th Beer & Hymns 6pm to 8pm - Pot luck and BYOB

Missy Althouse, Council Secretary

Calvary Lutheran Church Treasurer's Report

	August 2025
Beginning Balance	**$4,343.97**
Offerings:	
General Offering	11,515.00
ELCA Disaster Relief	5.00
Disaster Relief for Texas Flood	400.00
ELCA Mission Share	1,000.00
First English Rising City; Jul Share	3,100.81
	16,020.81
Transfers from:	
Improvement SAV 10% Tithe of Lindholm Gift	**5,000.00**
Thrivent SAV for Youth Road Trip	**927.30**
Expenses:	
Vanco eCheck Monthly Fee	9.73
Text Messaging System-monthly fee	25.00
Cody's Computer Maintenance Plan	39.99
Altar Candles	52.95
Lutheran Disaster Response; Texas Flooding	400.00
Youth Road Trip expenses	927.30
Edgewater Insurance (final quarter Installment)	3,797.00
Nebraska Synod, ELCA - Mission Share	1,595.00
First English Rising City; August Share	3,177.21
Tithe Giving of Clark Arlan Lindholm Estate:	
LFS for Dana Village Gym Renovation	3,000.00
Mourning Hope Grief Support	500.00
Utilities:	
Church	334.23
Parsonage	129.65
Salaries:	
Pastors Hillary & Evan Christensen	3,131.64
Portico Benefit Services	1,853.29
Commuting Reimbursement	162.50
SECA	297.05
Mileage Reimbursement	403.76
Cell Phone Reimbursement	65.00
Professional Expenses of Pastor Evan's	261.38
Amy & Janet	323.22
Lay/Music Mileage	219.80
LeeAnn	250.73
Linda	394.79
	21,351.22
Balance as of August 31, 2025:	**$4,940.86**

.....IN SACRED PLACES....

CALVARY Lutheran church
Nebraska Synod, ELCA

950 Road 129th
Stromsburg, NE 68666

Return Service Requested

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission Statement: Know God, Love God,
Share God's Love

Guiding Principles:

1. **Jesus is Lord and Savior**
2. **All are welcome in this place.**
3. **Serving in love with generosity and hospitality**
4. **Provide an atmosphere for spiritual growth and reflection.**
5. **Teaching and sharing God's Word with joy**
6. **Mutual respect in relationships**