

St. James Newsletter

March 2026

It is not a coincidence that the word “human,” shares a common root to the word “humus.” Now, for those of you who are active gardeners, you will recognize the word “humus” describing dirt. So how are dirt and humans connected.

If you are familiar with the creation story from Genesis 2, you will recall that God in that passage takes a handful of dirt from the garden and creates Adam (a Hebrew word meaning “human”). Adam is made from dirt. Then, into this lump of dirt God breathes the spirit of life. (In Hebrew and in Greek, the word for spirit, breath and wind are all the same.)

To consider that Genesis story and the theological understanding that humans come from humus, I find humbling (another word related to humus).

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. As a part of the Ash Wednesday liturgy worshipers are invited to come forward during the confession to have a cross of ashes traced on their foreheads. As the ashes are imposed, the presider says the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” The purpose of this rite is to remind us that as humans we are humus. It is a call to humbleness. It is a call to recognize that, before God, we are nothing but ashes and that we owe our very existence to the breath/spirit of God.

I recently heard someone comment that they don’t like the season of Lent because it is such a “downer.” And I suppose in some ways it is. I’m not sure that any of us like to be “humbled.”

But I think it is important, in the rhythm of the church year and in the rhythm of life, to be reminded of who we are. We are not God. We are humans. We are not in charge of the world. We are not in charge of our salvation. We are humus.

In recognizing who we are and who we are not, then, provides us the opportunity to also recognize the tremendous love that God has for us. God does in fact breathe into us the breath of life and shares his spirit with us. God cares so much for this lump of dirt that I am, that he gave me life and promises me a place in his kingdom.

Lent is an opportunity for us to be humble, and remember that even though we are humus, God loves us anyway.

In Christ,
Pastor Knowles

- ◆ Jane Massey
- ◆ Terri Warren
- ◆ Brad Hubbard



Meetings

- Property Team
March 2 at 6:00 pm
- Welcoming Team
March 5 at 6:00 pm
- Stewardship/Finance Team
March 16 at 4:00 pm via Zoom
- Council
March 17 at 7:00 pm in person and via Zoom.



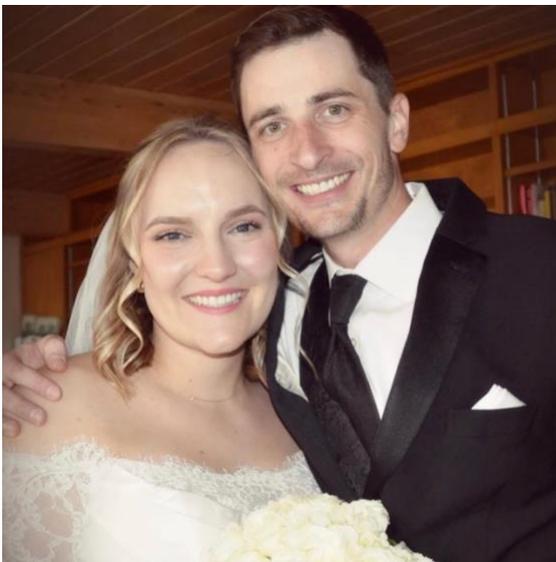
Quilters

St. James Quilters will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, March 21 at 1:00 pm. All are welcome, even beginners. Please join us as we quilt.



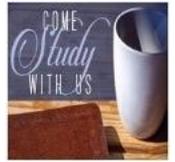
Wedding at St. James

Congratulation to Abbi Wieland and Christian Cottingham on their surprise wedding Saturday, February 21 at 4 pm!



Bible Study – Matthew

Bible Study led by Pastor Knowles will be on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 pm. We are in person at the church, or you can participate via Zoom. **There will no Bible Study on March 17.**



If you would prefer a daytime group, the Bible study is on Monday mornings at 10:00 am in the Upper Room at Calvary.

The Zoom links are on our website.

Women's Circle

The St. James Women's Circle will meet on Tuesday, March 17 at 2:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Hostess: Judy Johansen

Bible Study: Cam Palicki

"Bread Light and Vine", Hannah Hawkinson, God's Name, God's promise.

Café Women's Bible Study

This group will meet at 10:30 am on Saturday, March 14.

Sunday School

The Lordie Girls had a slowdown month in February due to travel and illness but will be preparing music for Palm Sunday and Easter this month. Stay tuned!

Bethany C. Weipert

Midweek Lenten Services

The 2026 Midweek Lenten Services are joint services with the Rock Island/Moline (RIM) congregations. The theme of the services is *Going Deeper: Conversations with Jesus*.

We are invited to explore the why behind what we do in response to God's call in an ever-changing world. We will join the conversation between Jesus and his partners from Sunday's gospel readings as we think about naming, claiming, and proclaiming our why.

Each week the RIM congregations will gather together for worship at 7:00 pm. A soup supper precedes worship at 6:00 pm. The schedule is as follows:

- March 4 @ First Lutheran, 1230 5th Ave, Moline
- March 11 @ Salem Lutheran, 1724 15th St, Moline
- March 18 @ St. James, Rock Island (co-hosted with Calvary)
- March 25 @ First Lutheran, 1600 20th St, Rock Island



Living Water Via de Cristo Weekend #68

When: March 19-22
Where: Camp Minohaven
1517 East St
Tiskilawa, IL

More specific information will be sent to you, after submitting an application. Please contact Rhea Frank-Cottingham 309-781-8546 for more information.

Rescue Mission Meal

Christian Care Center on Wednesday, March 11.

We will buy the ham and needed supplies. If you would like to help, we need volunteers to serve and prepare crockpot beans and cheesy potatoes.

A sign-up sheet is on the info table in the narthex. Meet in the church kitchen on the March 11 at 5:30 pm or bring prepared items before that time.

Thank you also to everyone who has donated a cake, brownies, or cookies for dessert.





"Raising Our Voices: Proclaiming the Gospel When the World is Loud"

Proclamation isn't shouting louder than hate...it's speaking, living and standing in love, truth, and justice as people claimed in Christ.

WELCA SPRING RETREAT 2026

"Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 4:11

APRIL 25, 2026

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

LOMC Oregon, IL

\$30 per person

Scholarships are available

**Program and Worship led by
Pr. Laurie Hensley, Bethany ELCA, Woodhull, IL**



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Northern Illinois Synod
Women of the ELCA Spring Retreat

Saturday, April 25, 2026

“Raising Our Voices: Proclaiming the Gospel When the World is Loud”

Half Scholarship Application

Program and worship led by Pastor Laurie Hensley, Bethany ELCA, Woodhull, IL

Deadline for Half Scholarship Application: March 25, 2026

The retreat is at LOMC, 1834 S IL Rt 2, Oregon, IL 61061

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name of ELCA Congregation in which you are a member _____

Your Pastor's name/church phone # _____

Conference _____

What is your involvement with the Women of the ELCA? _____

Why is attending this event important to you? _____

Have you received a retreat Scholarship before? _____ If so, when? _____

Your age: 20-35 _____ 36-50 _____ 51-75 _____ over 75 _____

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Scholarship Registration Fee: \$15.00

Please complete this form as well as the registration form

Please return the two completed forms to: Christine Beyer-5713 S. Derinda Rd, Elizabeth, IL. 61028 by March 25, 2026. You will be notified of the scholarship decision by March 30, 2026. If you have any questions, please call Christine at 815-858-4555.



_____ Reply _____

Northern Illinois Synod Women of the WELCA

Retreat Registration Form-2026

“Raising Our Voices: Proclaiming the Gospel When the World is Loud”

Saturday, April 26, 2026 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Program and worship led by Pastor Laurie Hensley, Bethany ELCA, Woodhull, IL.

Use this form to register for the Retreat—please note the deadline for registration.

Include a check for \$30.00, made payable to “NIS WELCA” for your registration fee which includes coffee, snacks, lunch and materials. If you would like to contribute to any the mission fields that we support, we would appreciate that as well. They are LSSI Prison Ministry Story Book Program, Our Savior’s Lutheran Church located on Rocky Boy Indian Reservation in Montana, Tanzania Women’s Department, India-Arcot Women’s Desk, and “Dollars for Our Daughters.” Be sure to note these additions below on your registration form.

Send this form and your check to **NIS WELCA to Kay Johnson-6043 E. Skinner Rd., Stillman Valley, IL. 61084. The registration deadline is April 1, 2026.**

LOMC, 1834 S IL Rt 2, Oregon, IL. 61061

Registration and coffee: 8:30-9:00 AM

...cut here.....

Please Print

Name _____ Conference _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Email: _____

Church Name/Address _____

Do you have a Companion Parish? _____ If so, where is it? _____

Registration Fee: \$30.00

Special needs (diet, physical, etc.) _____

I have applied for a scholarship: Yes _____ No _____ (please check one)

I wish to contribute the shown amount to the below mission(s):

LSSI Story Book _____ Tanzania Women’s Department _____

OSLC at Rocky Boy _____ India-Arcot Women’s Desk _____

Dollars for Our Daughters _____

Office use only: Check Received _____ Confirmation Sent _____

Invitation to Lofstrom Tanzania Missions Visit

Dr. Dennis and Paula Lofstrom and International Health Partners-TZ have been building hospitals in Tanzania since at least 2004 when the Hartmans traveled there. The Lofstroms were in charge of converting the leprosarium at Iambi in the old Augustana Mission field to a general hospital. St. James began support by contributing mattresses and pillows for the project. We met their builder son David West there. They next rebuilt a clinic into a hospital at Nyakato, Mwansa near Lake Victoria. The main emphasis later was the development of the Children's Hospital at Zinga near Bagamoyo, north of Dar es Salaam. IHP-TZ and Mary Ellen Kitundu also began a school of nursing at Dodoma. To answer the need another completely new medical center is to be opened on March 1 at Chihoni near Dodoma.

Paula and David will visit St. James Lutheran Church in Rock Island and share information about the progress of construction of the campus, opportunities for volunteers, and contributions for this project.

The Welcoming Team has planned a potluck dinner with chicken provided at St. James on Saturday, March 28 at 5 pm. **Paula will also speak at the St. James and Calvary joint service and fellowship on Sunday, March 29, at 8:30 am.**



David, Miriam, Dr. Powell, Paula, Dr. Bon, and Sele



Chihoni Outpatient Building



International Health Partners, U.S. & IHP-TZ

Dennis Lofstrom, M.D. and Paula Lofstrom, RN and Mary Ellen Kitundu, RN answered the call to bring health care to underserved people in Tanzania in 2002. Both Mary Ellen and Dennis have passed away. However, **Paula Lofstrom and her son, David West** are carrying on their legacies through the continued work of International Health Partners, U.S., & TZ.

In 2002 IHP began the restoration of Iambi Lutheran Hospital in the Central Diocese of Tanzania, near Singida. Over the next four years the hospital went from seeing 2-3 patients a day in the clinic and having only 3 patients in the 170-bed facility, to seeing an average of 110 patients a day and 80-90% occupancy in the rehabilitated hospital. The facility was then turned over to the church, fully staffed, fully equipped, and **self-sustaining**.

In 2006 IHP began building Nyakato Health Center near Mwanza, in the East of Lake Victoria Diocese of the Lutheran Church. Over the following 6 years, the clinic was seeing 120 patients a day, and the birthing center, surgery suite, eye center and wards were utilized, and the clinic had 122,000 active charts. This facility was handed over to the diocese, fully staffed, fully equipped, and **self-sustaining**.

Seeing the needs for more nurses, IHP founded St. John's University School of Nursing in Dodoma. It opened in 2007. Under Mary Ellen's supervision it grew to graduate an annual average of 130 nurses with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Now there are 1400 students in various healthcare programs including a Masters in Nursing Education, and pharmacy tech and lab tech programs.

It was the dream of Paula and Denny and Mary Ellen along with Mary Ellen's brother-in-law, the chief pediatrician in Tanzania, to build a pediatric hospital to serve the 22 million children under 15 years of age in Tanzania. Land was purchased, infrastructure brought in and building began at Zinga, about 35 miles north of Dar es Salaam, on the coast of the Indian Ocean. That facility opened in April 2016. Teams and medical students visited, served, and learned and then in 2020 Covid hit and visitors from other countries could no longer come. However, in Zinga, the services continued and still do. The staff felt ready to take over this project and IHP, as before, turned over a fully functioning, fully staffed, fully equipped healthcare facility to the Tanzanians trained to run it.

Now, another challenging area is going to be served by IHP-US & TZ. Chihoni is about 24 miles northwest of Dodoma, in the central part of Tanzania. Women in this area are dying because they cannot reach a medical facility in time if they are in protracted labor. Working aged adults, especially men, have fled to the cities to find work leaving the elderly alone at home with no medical resources or transport to them. IHP is determined to change this, to serve the underserved, and to again be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in the world today to bring healing and hope to God's children of all ages.

In her presentation Paula and her son David West will talk about the needs of the Tanzanian people and their own spiritual, mental, professional and geographic journey which has sustained them and brought them to Chihoni.

In addition to bringing education and inspiration, Paula and David will bring Tanzanian handicrafts to sell to raise funds in support of the facility at Chihoni. For more information, see their webpage at <http://www.ihptz.org>. Paula@ihptz.org 870-404-4491. Donations can be sent to: IHP, 2420 N 6th Ave, E, Newton, IA 50208.



International Health Partners–US

2420 N. 6th Ave. E.
Newton, IA. 50208-2651

President: Charles Powell, M.D.
Vice President: Marie Quanbeck
Secretary, Managing Director: Paula Lofstrom, LPN

View our projects at www.ihptz.org

January 21, 2026

Board Members:

Charles Powell, M.D., President
Marie Quanbeck, MSE,
Vice President

Duane Quanbeck, MBA,
Treasurer

Paula Lofstrom, LPN,
Managing Director

Joyce Zemel

Christine Petersen, M.D., MBA

Lynn Powell, M.D.

Kyle Landau

David West

Ron Overmyer, B.S. M.S.,

Jan Overmyer, R.N.

Mary Pace, B.S., M.Ed.

Josiah Grimes

St. James Lutheran Church
3145 31st Ave,
Rock Island, Illinois 61201

Thank you for your gifts totaling \$2,000.00 in 2025. No goods or services were provided in exchange for these gifts. International Health Partners is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation committed to improving the quality and availability of healthcare in Tanzania.

When good intentions merge with great ability, wonderful things happen. And they merged for us in 2025 in Chihoni, Tanzania, where we completed construction of the outpatient building. It is a beautiful and totally functional building designed to last for centuries. We expect to start seeing patients this month after the Tanzanian government gives us the green light, and the grand opening is scheduled during April.

Your gifts, along with the gifts of hundreds of others, have made this possible. It is overwhelming to realize that these gifts have made simple medical treatments available that will save hundreds, even thousands, of lives. I cannot thank you enough.

Meanwhile, site manager Sele is busy building a hostel just steps away from the outpatient building. It will be used as lodging for visiting medical teams and other volunteers. In fact, if you and your team would like to volunteer your services to help us improve healthcare in Tanzania, please contact Paula Lofstrom at Paula@ihptz.org for opportunities in 2027. You can help with the Tanzania mission, and you can see for yourselves how your dollars are working to improve healthcare in Tanzania.



Thank you for your kindness,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Duane Quanbeck".

Duane Quanbeck
Treasurer

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

A service for everyone!

Friday 6 March

I will give you rest, come

Come Celebrate with Church Women United
Rock Island/Milan Unit

Friday - March 6, 2026

Grace Presbyterian Church
2324 18th Avenue
Rock Island, Illinois

9am - Registration
9:30am - Program (featuring Karen Young, speaker)
Brunch
Admission: \$10

RSVP: Tarrilee Shannon,
309-781-1394



Nigeria 2026



INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION

24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led
wwdp.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 233242

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED ROCK ISLAND/MILAN UNIT

Companions Journeying Together, Inc. has invited us to participate in the annual Mother's Day card project. We are collecting unsigned cards and stationery to send to imprisoned juveniles, women, and men in Illinois. They can use the cards to keep in touch with their loved ones.

Materials they need

Stationery, Mother's Day cards, Thinking of You cards

USPS forever postage stamps

Monetary donations to help cover delivery costs

Please make your check payable to Companions Journeying Together, Inc.

Golf pencils without an eraser

Materials they cannot use

White paper, notebook paper, yellow or very old cards

Cards, envelopes or stationery that have any glitter or anything glued, pasted or taped on them or that have stickers attached.

Nothing with crayon, highlighter or marker. *This is very important as we follow prison rules.*

Regular pencils and ballpoint pens

Responses from recipients

"Thank you for remembering us."

"You can't know how much it means to know that there are people who care for me and my children."

Please collect the items and bring them to the CWU observance of World Day of Prayer on March 6, 2026, at

Grace Church 2324 18th Avenue Rock Island, Illinois

Thank you for your support.

Assisting on Sunday – March 2026

Sunday	Lector	Counters	Sound Booth
March 1	Ruth Anne Hartman	Stacy Miles Tina Wieland	Mike Olinski
March 8	Rhea Frank-Cottingham	Todd Gann Linda Ryden	Bob Ryden
March 15	Terrill Johnson	Dave Renneke Rhea Frank-Cottingham	Dave Renneke
March 22	Cam Palicki	Ruth Anne Hartman Gary Wolber	Jerry Johansen
March 29	Mark Ridolfi	Jerry Johansen Bill Kempf	Dave Renneke

Birthdays

Christopher George	3/2
Jacob Lukenhaus	3/2
Virginia Johnson	3/6
Aden Rasmussen	3/8
Bethany Weipert	3/9
Aline Nshimirimana	3/10
Pam Trotter	3/12
Tina Wieland	3/13
Thomas Ohlsen	3/18
Joe Loete	3/20
Tim Pressly	3/20
Colin Carstens	3/25
Ryan Wolber	3/26
Elizabeth Carstens	3/31



Congregational Resourcing Event – March 7, 2026, 9:00-3:45

Going Deeper at CRE

Join leaders from across our Northern Illinois Synod for a day of learning, networking, worshipping, and growing as disciples. It will be at Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, Illinois.

\$40 per person – Register at nisynod.org/cre

March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship, SS (SJ) 10:30a Worship (AS)	2 10:00a Bible Study at Calvary or via Zoom 7:00p Property Team	3 6:30p Boy Scouts 6:30p Bible Study at church or via Zoom	4 5:00p Stations of the Cross (AS) 6:00p Soup Supper & Lenten Service @ First Lutheran Moline	5 6:30p Cub Scouts 6:00p Welcoming Team	6 9:00a CWU World Day of Prayer Grace RI Office Closed	7 9:00-3:45 NIS CRE Sauk Valley Community College Dixon, IL
8 2:00a Change clocks 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship, SS (SJ) 10:30a Worship (AS)	9 10:00a Bible Study at Calvary or via Zoom 10:30a Retired Pastor's 6:00p Junior League	10 6:30p Boy Scouts 6:30p Bible Study at church or via Zoom	11 5:00p Stations of the Cross (AS) 5:30p Rescue Mission Meal 6:00p Soup Supper & Lenten Service @ Salem Lutheran	12 6:30p Cub Scouts	13 Office Closed	14 10:30a Café Women's Bible Study
15 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship, SS (SJ) 10:30a Worship (AS)	16 10:00a Bible Study at Calvary or via Zoom 4:00p Stewardship/ Finance in person or via Zoom	17 2:00p Women's Circle 6:30p Boy Scouts 7:00p Council at church or via Zoom	18 5:00p Stations of the Cross (AS) 6:00p Soup Supper & Lenten Service @ St. James/Calvary	19 6:30p Cub Scouts	20 Office Closed	21 1:00p Quilters
22 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship, SS (SJ) 10:30a Worship (AS)	23 10:00a Bible Study at Calvary or via Zoom	24 6:30p Boy Scouts 6:30p Bible Study at church or via Zoom	25 5:00p Stations of the Cross (AS) 6:00p Soup Supper & Lenten Service @ First Lutheran RI.	26 6:30p Cub Scouts	27 Office Closed	28 5:00p Chicken and Potluck dinner. Paula and David Lofstrom talk
29 Palm Sunday 8:30a Joint Worship with Calvary at St. James 10:30a Worship (AS)	30 10:00a Bible Study at Calvary or via Zoom	31 6:30p Boy Scouts 6:30p Bible Study at church or via Zoom				

St. James on the Web

stjamesri.org



309-786-0503

saintjamesri@gmail.com

At our website you will find
single-click links to

[Facebook](#)

and St. James photos

[Flickr photos](#)

St. James is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation

In our awareness that we are all broken people, we rejoice in God's abundant grace. Therefore, we welcome all who are seeking God's love and forgiveness regardless of national origin or ancestry, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, abilities, beliefs, political views, financial resources, or family status.

There will always be a place for you at St. James.

For more information check out [Reconciling Works](#).



St. James Lutheran Church
3145 31st Ave
Rock Island, IL 61201

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE