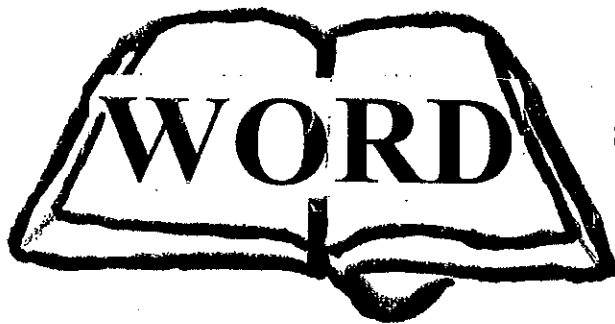


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The "Good News" and "Happenings" of  
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Stovertown

[www.stovertownelca.com](http://www.stovertownelca.com)

VOL.17, No. 7

Pastor-Al Laese-740-541-2323

July 24, 2025

## "ACT OF NATURE" OR "ACT OF GOD"

These are essentially synonymous referring to events caused by natural forces beyond human control.

**"ACT OF NATURE"** is a event caused solely by natural forces without human interventions. Such as lightning, blizzards, earthquakes, flash floods, etc.

The difference- **"ACT OF GOD"** generally refers to an event involving a natural disaster. Acts of God are any natural incidents considered beyond an individual's control, difficult to predict, and hard to quantify in terms of damages that occur.

Are God and nature the same? There is nothing separate from God, for God is the universe. If on the other hand, the conception taken as the foundation of the system is that the great inclusive unity is the world itself, or the universe, God is swallowed up in that unity, which may be designated as nature.

-Lion's Roar & Wikipedia

Following the horrible flash flooding in Texas over the fourth of July, we may have found ourselves asking was this an "Act of Nature or Act of God". No matter how we try to define this horrible event we all know that with it has come an extreme amount of human suffering.

During times of turmoil, God's people have reason to be confident. Hezekiah described God as "our refuge and strength" and "an ever-present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). God has the ability to protect His people in any circumstance, and His power is unlimited. God is not deterred by threats of war, natural disasters, violence, terrorism, or any catastrophe. Regardless of the situation, there is no need for us to fear, because God does not abandon His people in times of trouble.

Storms come in a variety of shapes and sizes (not just natural disasters). In day-to-day life, some of the most common offenders are financial issues, medical problems, depression and anxiety, tension at work, addition, family disputes, and other problems that leave us feeling fearful and confused. In the gospel of Mark we read an account of Jesus and His disciples encountering a storm as they traveled by boat. The disciples were terrified and feared for their lives, but Jesus was sound asleep in the boat. When they woke up Jesus He rebuked the wind and calmed the storm. By doing so, Jesus demonstrated His power over nature. Jesus is not only in control of nature; He is also sovereign over every troubling circumstance we encounter. Like the disciples, we too can approach Jesus for help. The author of Hebrews wrote, "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (4:16)

-The God of comfort, Zondervan

WHY DOESN'T GOD SAVE HIS PEOPLE  
FROM A NATURAL DISASTER

-Lion's Roar

The answer is that God does not intervene because in His divine wisdom He knows that such intervention would not be in our best eternal interest and also because if we turn to Him, He can and will enable us to overcome all of the negative effects of such sufferings.

-Matthew 24:6-8

God responds to suffering thru His Presence, His people, and ultimately through Jesus. God may not always take away our pain, but He never leaves us alone in it. Through Jesus we see the clearest expression of God's compassion, comfort, and hope.

Let us all pray for the people in Texas and everywhere who have lost so much. May God be their refuge and strength through their times of need.

\*\*\*\*\*

## A SPEEDY RECOVERY.....

We wish Susan Dietz a speedy recovery from her shoulder surgery. **But meanwhile, we would like to thank Joy Pletcher for filling in for her so we still enjoy music on Sunday mornings.** Also our thoughts and prayers go out to all of our members and loved ones who are recovering or going through a health issue.

\*\*\*\*\*

## WELCA NEWS.....

WELCA will not meet during the month of August. However, the **BASEMENT SALE** will be held on August 1st & 2<sup>nd</sup>. It would be helpful if you could bring your items for sale the week of July 27<sup>th</sup>.

Also the WELCA will pack LWR Kits on September 9 at 2:00PM at the church. There is a tote in the choir loft for your donations for the Health Kits and School Kits that will be collected through Aug. 15. Check the list for items needed.

\*\*\*\*\*

## PRODUCE GIVE-A-WAY.....

Will be held on Tuesday, August 19 at 9AM  
Volunteers will be needed by 8:00AM and much appreciated.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CHURCH CANOEING TRIP AND CAMP-IN AT HOCKING HILLS.....

This event will be held the weekend of Friday, September 12, and Saturday, September 13 at Campbell Cove in Hocking Hills. Attendees will canoe on Saturday morning and then join the campers who will be arriving on Friday evening for a potluck meal on Saturday evening. Even if you do not wish to canoe, join us on Saturday evening for fun and fellowship. See Steve Wolfe for further details.

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## BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST.....

### BIRTHDAYS:

August 2---Gail Swingle  
8---Caleb Brassfield  
21---Karen Showers  
23---Dave Swingle  
27---Lindsey Cramer

### ANNIVERSARIES:

August 8---Jim & Gail Swingle  
15---Larry & Jamey  
Brassfield

\*\*\*\*\*

## THANK YOU.....

Chad Williams wishes to thank everyone for their cards and prayers during his hospital stay and recovery.

\*\*\*\*\*

**St John's Lutheran Church**  
**Congregational Council Meeting Minutes**  
**June 5, 2025**

**Council Vice President, Bob Pletcher, opened the meeting at 8:04 pm.** Members present: Nate Atkins, Tom Gibson, Pastor Al Laese, Joe Pletcher, Linda Showers, Bill Thomas, and Gary Williams. Bob confirmed a quorum.

**Devotion** Nate Atkins presented the devotion "The Glory of God's Creation" - Genesis 28:16-22.

**Linda Showers read the unapproved minutes from the May meeting.** [Approved: N. Atkins/T. Gibson].

**PASTOR'S REPORT – May 2025** - 3 Sunday worship services & Sunday School; 1 Church Council meeting; 1 private communion; 1 visit; 1 funeral (Jerusalem); 1 other event; 1 weekend off (memorial service in Shippensburg, PA); 3 Cluster meetings; 153 miles. Bob Pletcher will attend the Synod Meeting with Pr. Laese at the Columbus Zoo (June 6-7). [Accept: T. Gibson/G. Williams].

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – reviewed by council [Accept: T. Gibson/G. Williams].

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**CEMETERY** – Secretary, Bill Thomas, reported no plots were purchased in May.

**EDUCATION** – no report

**FINANCE** – no report

**PRAYER CO.** – no report

**PRODUCE** – Produce Chr., Gary Williams, read Produce Market Report: Tuesday, 5/20/25 - 99 households served (including 206 individuals) - 4 counties/11 zip codes; 17 volunteers – thank you all volunteers!

**PROPERTY** – no report

**WITNESS/EVANGELISM** – Witness/Evangelism Chair, Linda Showers, reported that the Annual Volunteer Signup produced volunteers for the Cruise-In and for the Basement Sale. In addition, on the Volunteer Signup "Other Ideas" section, David Fisher suggested that St. John's look into disaster relief volunteer opportunities - Linda will research and report back. Linda also reported that Vince Showers is creating an Excel file to record church data, including baptisms, marriages, funerals, giving, communion, etc. The file will be backed up on multiple hard drives, and housed with at least 2 different Council members. The two existing hard copy books will be safely stored at the church and at a Council member's home.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Bill Thomas opened discussion on the proposal to add 100 graves to the cemetery. [L. Showers/N. Atkins]  
Motion approved.

Council welcomes applications for the Camp Scholarship Fund Process for youth who would benefit from a church camp scholarship.

**NEW BUSINESS**

[None]

**Motion to Adjourn – 8:46 pm** [T. Gibson/G. Williams]

Meeting followed by The Lord's Prayer

J. Pletcher - for Council Secretary, Frank Dietz

## Minutes of the Women of the ELCA

June 9, 2025

The women of the ELCA met at the church. Eight members were present.

President Kathy Jenkins welcomed everyone. She read scripture on God's grace. She thanked everyone who helped and contributed to the Mother/Daughter/Friends Banquet. Special thanks go to Karen Showers for her program on angels and all the little touches she added that made it extra-special. She also thanked Joy Pletcher and Bob Pletcher for the special music. Thanks also to Joy for supplying some of the door prizes. Thanks to Kathy Jenkins and her daughters for setting up the table décor and Kathy for getting some of the door prizes. Kathy also thanked Karen for hosting today's meeting and providing the topic.

**There were no secretary and treasurer's reports.**

### Committee Reports

**Mission Growth:** No report

**Mission Community:** Kathy will check out sites for our July 8<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) church outing. **Watch for details.** All are invited. We will be playing bingo so please bring a white elephant gift for prizes.

**Mission Action:** Quilting has begun, please join us Tuesday mornings to help create quilts to warm the bodies and spirits of people throughout the world. A list of needed items for the personal care kits and school kits for Lutheran World Relief will be in The Word and future bulletins. Please contribute as you are able.

### Old / New Business

-Kathy read a thank-you note from Vicky Thomas.

-August 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> will be the basement sale. **Please bring your items the week of July 27<sup>th</sup> and take them down to the basement.** Thank-you for your cooperation.

### Topic

Karen had an inspiring topic that continued her theme from the M/D/F Banquet – Angels among and within us. She read several stories of how each of us could be called by God to act as an angel to someone else. She also read a letter she received from a produce giveaway guest who appreciated Karen's concern and note when she was experiencing pain issues as well as thanking all the workers who help with the giveaway providing food and smiles. Karen reminded us that when God calls us to be angels we need to be ready to respond.

Karen served a delicious strawberry pretzel salad.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Showers, Secretary

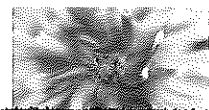
The next WELCA meeting is  
September 9<sup>th</sup> at the church at 2PM.  
We will be packing quilts and kits for  
LWR. Linda Showers is the hostess.

# August 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>PASTOR</b> 740-541-2823	<b>CHURCH</b> 740-697-0202				1 <b>WELCA basement Sale</b>	2 <b>WELCA Basement Sale</b>
<b>3</b> Holy Communion Worship-10AM SCS-9AM WELCA change collection	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Worship-10AM SCS-9AM	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 Worship-10AM SCS-9AM WELCA change collection	18	Produce Give-a-Way	19	20	21	22
24 Worship-10AM SCS-9AM	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Worship-10AM SCS-9AM				Vicky Thomas Secretary 740-674-6814 © 740-252-1890 cabininthearchard@yahoo.com		

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OF STOVERTOWN .....**

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**"We, the members of St. John's Lutheran Church of Stovertown, being children of  
God, would like to invite all to share in the good news of Jesus Christ. As witnesses  
of God's love and forgiveness we reach out to you".**