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

Stovertown

VOL.18, No. 6

June 24, 2026



"HAPPY 250TH BIRTHDAY" (1776-2026)

We, as the United States of America will celebrate on July 4th, 2026, the 250th year of our founding and our religious freedom.

America's Founding was rooted in the belief that every man, woman and child is 'endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. (Our Declaration of Independence.)

Freedom to worship has been a defining feature of the United States throughout its history. Many of the original 13 states were settled by those fleeing religious persecution, such as the Pilgrims in Massachusetts, Catholics in Maryland and Quakers in Pennsylvania.

Though 98% of Americans in 1776 were Protestant Christians, they were of different denominations and often disagreed over matters of faith. Yet their common Christian heritage inspired our Founding Fathers to guarantee religious freedom in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

George Washington, America's first president, wrote in his 1796 Farewell Address: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indisputable supports."

Like Washington, Americans value the power of faith and the freedom to worship as they choose. Today, 70% of Americans identify with a religion, the majority of them Christians, according to Pew Research Center data. Some 59% of Americans have a positive view of religion's influence in American life.

"From the earliest days of our national story, reflection and thanksgiving have been central to our character, identity, and destiny."

"Today, too, we pray that our noble cause continues to be guided by the hand of providence and the grace of God- and that the fire of freedom will forever burn brightly in the hearts of every American."

- "Share America" by Charles Hoskinson

Some Bible readings relating to our freedom is listed below:

Galatians 5:13- "For you have been called to live in freedom. Use your freedom to serve one another in love."

2 Corinthians 3:17: Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, There is Liberty

1 Corinthians 8:9: But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak,

John 8:36: So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

**ENJOY OUR NATIONS 250TH BIRTHDAY
ON THE FOURTH OF JULY!!!!!!**

**A CHANCE TO BE INVOLVED IN
THE MINISTRY OF OUR CHURCH**

At the May 7th, 2026 Council meeting, council approved a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Transition Team to "contract one or more individuals to participate in either the LWL (Lay Worship Leader) Program or SAM (Synod Authorized Minister) Program of the Southern Ohio Synod. **Council is seeking individuals who will prayerfully consider this opportunity.** The SAM program includes a 2 year training course, while the LWL involves 1 year training course. Both programs meet one weekend a month (for 8 months-August to May- excluding December and January-Zoom meeting Friday evening; in person Saturday)

For more information:

<https://southernohio synod.org/lay/-leaders/leadership-academy/>

In addition (in the approved recommendation): "In return for officially agreeing to serve as a lay minister at St. John's Lutheran Church, Stovertown for an agreed-in-time period, the church would pay for the candidate's tuition, mileage for monthly classes, and meals when attending classes and other expenses accrued such as textbooks." Members of the congregation may also contribute to a scholarship fund for any St. John's, Stovertown SAM or LWL Program participants. Please contact Linda Showers if interested.

[\(lsshower@gmail.com/309-531-8896\)](mailto:lsshower@gmail.com/309-531-8896)

PRODUCE-GIVE-AWAY.....

Will be held on Tuesday, July 21 at 9:00AM. Volunteers will be needed and appreciated. You will need to arrive by 8AM.

**CAR SHOW (Oct. 10, 2026)
COMMITTEE MEETING.....**

Will be held on Wednesday night, July 15th at 7:00PM at the church.

WELCA NEWS.....

WELCA is making **Personal Care Kits and School Kits** this summer for Lutheran World Relief. A list of needed items is attached to the container in the choir loft. Donations will be collected until Aug. 31. See Kay Wilson or Joy Pletcher with questions.

ALSO: the ladies would like to invite everyone to a **pizza party and Bingo night** on Tuesday, July 14th at 6PM at the church. Salad, pizza and drinks will be provided. Make your reservations with Janet Novaria so she can order the pizzas. Please bring an item to contribute to the Bingo prize cache.

ALSO: the **WELCA Basement Sale** will be Friday, July 31 and Saturday, August 1. Please do not bring items for the sale before July 24th. When you bring them, please put them in the basement along the side walls. Thank you for all contributions.

**BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES
FOR THE MONTH OF JULY.....**

Birthdays:

July 11—Delores Wolfe
12---Joe Pletcher
13---Shirley Kessler
21---Kathy Jenkins

Anniversaries: July 5---Megan & Matt

Fraunfelter
25—Joy & Joe Pletcher
31---Robert & Renee
Deitrick

St John's Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2026

Council vice president Robert Pletcher opened the meeting at 8:00 P.M. Members present were Joe Pletcher, Bill Thomas, Frank Dietz, Brian Miller, Linda Showers, Nathan Atkins, Carol Cramer, Steve Wolfe, and Pastor Al Laese.

Robert Pletcher led devotions with multiple readings about serving one another.

Council secretary Frank Dietz presented the April council minutes. Property committee chair Nathan Atkins corrected his report to "The mower received a \$352.37 service from American Pride Power Equipment." The minutes were approved as corrected on a motion from Joe Pletcher and Linda Showers.

Pastors report for the month of April 2026: Easter Sunrise worship festival, Easter Sunrise breakfast, 3 Sunday school and worship services, a hospital visit, cluster meeting at Brookside Lutheran in Bridgeport Ohio(170 miles), 3 local cluster meetings, church council meeting, Mary Spring funeral in Roseville, 347 miles submitted. Pastor reported good weather and great church service for the trip to Indiana to commemorate the April 74 tornado. Pastor's report approved on a motion from Frank Dietz and Steve Wolfe.

The treasurer's report was reviewed by council. The Misc and Memorial entries were corrected. An itemized list of receipts and disbursements is still desired by council members. The treasurer's report was approved on a motion from Linda Showers and Steve Wolfe 8 to 1.

COMMITTEE REPORTS 8:29 P.M.

Cemetery – The grounds are mowed every Thursday weather permitting, and deep ruts made during wet weather have been smoothed and reseeded.

Education – Sunday School has been blessed with good attendance and good discussions.

Finance – Thrivent Financial has awarded Stovertown Lutheran Church with a \$10,000 grant from the Pete and Judy Zeig Memorial Fund to be used for general church support in memory of Mary Jean Cassady.

Produce – March 17, 2026. 12 volunteers served 53 households vegetables on a snowy 20 degree Tuesday morning. Excess produce was delivered to the Senior Center.

April 21, 2026. 17 volunteers served 79 households vegetables on a chilly Tuesday morning. Excess produce was delivered to a very thankful Senior Center. The survey given to attendees showed that desired items were paper towels(39), bread(33), milk(31), crackers(31), tissues(30), cereal(27), peanut butter(26), spaghetti(17), cake mix(15), mac & cheese(14), rice(10) and spaghetti O's(7).

Property – The rear sidewalk unevenness will be corrected. The women's restroom will be evaluated and repaired as needed.

Committee reports were accepted on a motion from Steve Wolfe and Carol Cramer.
OLD BUSINESS 8:40 P.M.

The first proposal from the Transition Team about the Lay Worship Leader(LWL) and the Synod Authorized Minister Program(SAM) was presented to council as a motion for action. Linda Showers seconded the motion to advertise and support interested participants. The motion was approved by council.

The sample of carpet proposed by the property committee for basement, stairs, and back room replacement was approved by council.

Any interested candidates or sponsors for summer youth camp should see a council member.

Linda Showers and Frank Dietz motioned that Pastor Shannon Ramey's compensation for the April service be adjusted to \$225 per SOS recommendation. The motion was approved by council.

The church rental fees and church policy sheet have been revised and updated. Please review the posted sheets in the narthex and the kitchen.

NEW BUSINESS

Gary Pecuch, SOS youth ministry coach and website resource manager would like to worship with the Stovertown congregation on a Sunday morning.

The Proposal #2 from the Transition Team was not received well by all parties involved. SOS assistant to the Bishop and Synod Representative Katie Kerigan would like to meet with the Transition Team and church council to discuss the wording of Proposal #2. Frank Dietz and Steve Wolfe motioned to have the meeting with Synod representative May 20, 2026. (Due to events that followed, this meeting was changed to just a joint meeting of the Transition Team and church council) The motion was approved by council.

Frank Dietz and Steve Wolfe motioned to adjourn at 9:37 P.M.

All prayed The Lord's Prayer

Frank Dietz – council secretary

Minutes of the Women of the ELCA

June 9, 2026

The women of the ELCA met at the church. Six members were present. Janet Novaria served delicious cream pies. President Susan Showers opened the meeting with prayer. She thanked Janet Novaria for hosting. Kathy Jenkins was also thanked for all her hard work and creativity on the Mother/Daughter/Friends Banquet in May. Also thanked were Janet Slack for providing beautiful worship music for a sing-a-long and a thanks to all those who attended the banquet. Approximately 19 ladies attended the dinner.

Secretary's report: none

Treasurer's report: Savings - \$4221.42

Checking - \$704.97

Bucket money - \$171.10

Correspondence

A thank you card was read from the Miller family for providing a comfort meal.

Committee Reports

Mission Growth: No report

Mission Community: Kathy thanked all those who attended May's banquet.

Mission Action: Joy Pletcher will be providing a list of needed items for the LWR school kits and personal care kits in the near future.

Old / New Business

- A discussion of where to have the July 14th WELCA Bingo outing was held. Karen Showers moved that we have the outing at the church at 6 PM with WELCA purchasing pizza and salad. Janet Novaria seconded the motion. Motion passed. It is requested that all those planning on attending, let Janet Novaria know by July 12th so we know how many pizzas to purchase. Please remember to bring an item for the Bingo prizes.

- The WELCA basement sale will be Friday, July 31st and Saturday, August 1st. Please do not bring items for the sale before July 24th. When you bring them, please put them in the basement along the side walls. Thank-you. Any women available the week of July 26th please give some time at the church to help Jamey Brassfield set up for the sale. Thank-you.

- Leslie Williams moved that we increase the bucket money from \$171.10 to \$200 and donate it to purchase bread for the June Produce Giveaway. Kathy Jenkins seconded the motion. Motion passed. Thank-you to all who have contributed to the bucket fund!

Topic

The topic was on the importance of community centered on women of faith. An activity was used based on faith and summertime activity questions to help us get to know each other better.

July 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CHURCH 740-697-0202		Vicky Thomas Secretary 740-674-6814 (H) 740-252-1890 (C)		Council 8PM		HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!!!!
Holy Communion Worship-10AM SCS-9AM WELCA change collection	5	6	7	8	9	10
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Worship-10AM SCS-9AM		WELCA pizza & Bingo 6PM at church	CAR COMMITTEE Meeting 7PM			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Worship-10AM SCS-9AM WELCA change collection		Produce Give-A-Way 9AM				
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Worship-10AM SCS-9AM						

COLUMBUS OH 430
22 JUN 2026 PM 6 L



RETURN
TO: ST. JOHN'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH,
STOVERTOWN
P.O. BOX 361
PHILO, OH 43771



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

HAPPINESS.....

4370133004 1812
Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned,
worn or consumed.

Happiness is the spiritual experience of living
every minute with love, grace and gratitude.

Denis Waitley

The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance,
The wise grows it under his feet.

James Oppenheim

MISSION STATEMENT FOR ST. JOHN'S, LUTHERAN CHURCH, OF STOVERTOWN.....

"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".