

## Services of Worship

### Sundays

- Spencer 9am
- Riplinger 11am

### Mondays

- Spencer 6:30pm

Pastor Ritchie Cole

Email: [sjlc13pastor@gmail.com](mailto:sjlc13pastor@gmail.com)

Phone: 920-216-4292

### Spencer Congregation: & Parish Office

210167 State Hwy 13

Spencer, WI 54479

715-659-5158

Email: [sjlcoffice13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcoffice13@gmail.com)

### Riplinger Congregation:

W1776 2nd Avenue

Spencer, WI 54479

### Website

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

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/sjlcSpencer](https://www.facebook.com/sjlcSpencer)

### Instagram

[https://www.instagram.com/  
spencerst.johns/](https://www.instagram.com/spencerst.johns/)

### YouTube

[https://www.youtube.com/  
@StJohnsSpencer](https://www.youtube.com/@StJohnsSpencer)

### Minister of Faith Formation

Jenny Nieman

Email: [jennyfaith659@gmail.com](mailto:jennyfaith659@gmail.com)

Cell: 715-613-3636

### Parish Secretary

Pam Hardrath

Wednesday 5:30 to 9 pm

Email: [sjlcoffice13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcoffice13@gmail.com)

For immediate assistance, call or text

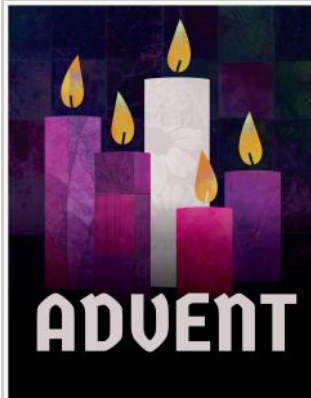
715-507-0549

### Deadlines

- Weekly email: Tuesdays 9am
- Sunday announcements:  
Wednesday 5pm



# Connect DECEMBER 2025



As Christmas approaches, it brings with it a time of reflection, joy, and profound gratitude. We are reminded of the greatest gift ever given – the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Advent, let's look at the familiar Christmas classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, through the lens of faith. We may never know exactly why the Grinch hated Christmas — we just know he did. Together we'll discover how Christ speaks to us through this beloved story of transformation, hope, and joy.

## Blue Christmas, December 14 at 6pm

A gentle, comforting worship experience for anyone feeling "blue" this Christmas. It's a space to mourn, to reflect, and to find hope in the promise of Jesus. The holidays can be especially difficult when you're carrying grief, loss, or heavy emotions. Whether you're mourning a loved one, navigating a broken relationship, facing job challenges, or struggling with depression, you don't have to walk through this season alone. Feel free to bring a picture or a symbol of what is making you feel "blue" this holiday season. [Sign up here if you can serve in worship.](#)



## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at Riplinger and 4pm and 6pm at Spencer. Bring your loved ones and join us for Christmas Eve service. Come and celebrate the joy of the season as we gather to worship and reflect on the miracle of Christ's birth.



## Christmas Day

December 25<sup>th</sup> at 9am at Spencer. Begin Christmas Day, celebrating the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ.

[Sign up here to serve in worship on  
Christmas Eve or Day.](#)

## WELCOME PASTOR RITCHIE COLE

"Such a large crowd of witnesses is all around us! So we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially the sin that just won't let go. And we must be determined to run the race that is ahead of us. We must keep our eyes on Jesus, who leads us and makes our faith complete. He endured the shame of being nailed to a cross, because he knew later on he would be glad he did. Now he is seated at the right side of God's throne!" Hebrews 12:1-2 Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress under license #SBL 1529 CEV®



On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, Pastor Ritchie Cole was elected as the Pastor who will lead us into the future. Please welcome him on November 30<sup>th</sup>. You may notice there is still an assisting minister scheduled, we would like to give Pastor Ritchie the opportunity to observe worship in action, before asking him to jump in. As we move into the future God has planned for us, keep Pastor Ritchie and his wife Lorna as well as our congregations in your prayers.

Verses for Prayer and Support:

**Ephesians 6:18-20:** Pray for Pastor Ritchie to be bold in proclaiming the gospel and for words to be given to him when he speaks.

**2 Corinthians 1:11:** Encourage our congregations to help Pastor Ritchie by praying for him so that many will give thanks on their behalf.

**Joshua 1:9:** Pray for Pastor Ritchie to be strong and courageous, and for God to be with him wherever he goes.

**Proverbs 2:6:** Pray that God would give Pastor Ritchie the wisdom and knowledge needed to lead the congregation well.

Verses for our role:

**Jeremiah 3:15:** Remember that God is the one who provides pastors after His own heart to guide them.

**Romans 15:13:** Pray that the God of hope would fill the pastor with joy and peace, and that the congregation would be filled with hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

## LEADERSHIP BOARD

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:7 Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress under license #SBL 1529 NIV®

### Voting Results November 16

The congregation approved the Church Board structure effective after the Annual Meeting on January 25, 2026. Please prayerfully consider where you may feel called to serve within our new structure. We will be seeking nominees for the following roles: Secretary (1– 15 month position), Liaisons (3 positions), Spiritual Care Team (3 positions), Cemetery Committee (1 position for 3 years), Financial Secretary (1 position). After the election, the Liaisons and Spiritual Care Team will decide who will serve for 1 year, 2 years and 3 years. We are also looking for Coordinators for: Beyond Our Doors, Food, Fellowship & Fun, Congregational Care, Worship, and Buildings & Grounds. Your willingness to serve helps strengthen our church family. Thank you for considering where God may be leading you!

Annual Meeting Dates  
Riplinger, January 18<sup>th</sup>  
Spencer, January 25<sup>th</sup>



## Scripture:

November 30 &  
December 1

Advent Begins  
Proverbs 4:20-27  
Hebrews 10:24-25  
Luke 1:26-38

December 7 & 8  
Ecclesiastes 4:1-3; 9-12  
Isaiah 9:1-7  
John 16:33

December 14 & 15  
Isaiah 11:1-10  
Psalm 100:1-3  
Matthew 1:18-25

December 21 & 22  
Spencer Christmas Program  
Isaiah 7:10-17  
Romans 1:1-7  
Luke 1:39-45

December 28 & 29  
Isaiah 63:7-14  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Matthew 2:13-23



Sign up for our

NEWSLETTER

## Weekly Email Link

If you do not currently receive our Wednesday weekly email, newsletter and other electronic communications and would like to, please use this [link](#) to sign up. If you need the link emailed to you, please let the office [sjlcoffice13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcoffice13@gmail.com) know. Thank-you!!

# CHRISTMAS WORSHIP & KIDS

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" Isaiah 9:6

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## WHY CHILDREN NEED TO GET TO CHURCH ON CHRISTMAS

Worshippingwithchildren.blogspot.com by Carolyn C. Brown

In most families Christmas Eve and Day are busy, chaotic times. It is not easy to get a family that includes overly excited children to church. But it is worth the effort. Children (and their parents) actually need it.

**To hear the story read or told** in an important way on the "night it happened" - Children like hearing the story of their birth on their birthday and celebrating other big events on "the very day it happened." So, the story which may have been acted out in a pageant and discussed in JAM, and read at home, feels more "real" when read on Christmas Eve or Day in the sanctuary.

**To go to church at night**— These days children are at church most often during the day. To go at night to a decorated, even candle-lit church is almost magical. When the family makes this an important part of Christmas – even in the middle of the chaos – just being there reminds children what is most important about Christmas.

**To be with a crowd telling the story**— Joining church friends reminds children that this story is something bigger than just their family traditions. They are part of a huge family of families who celebrate Jesus' birth.

**To sing the carols at least one more time**— Not many families sing together at home and not many children's groups sing religious carols any more. That means we need to be intentional about singing the carols with the children. And, who would want to miss singing "Silent Night" in the Christmas Eve sanctuary while hugging your child bathed in candlelight!

**To create a context in which to discover the truth about Santa**— If Santa is all there is to Christmas Eve once children learn "the truth," Christmas is just a greedy gift grab. But, if Christmas Eve has always circled around the story of Jesus told in the sanctuary the Christmas celebration gets richer.

**To create memories**— Worshiping on Christmas Eve or Day as a family creates over the years a treasure trove of memories. Some of them shine with wonder. Others make for eye-rolling stories that are retold every Christmas. These memories are precious for both the children as they mature and the parents as they age. Make worship together as a family a priority for your Christmas celebration.

\*Please join us for Blue Christmas at 6pm on December 14 at Spencer, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 2pm at Riplinger, 4pm and 6pm at Spencer and Christmas Day at 9am at Spencer.\*

# CHRIST

For unto you is born this day  
in the city of David a Saviour,  
which is CHRIST the Lord.

LUKE 2:11, KJV



## December 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Updates will be included in the Sunday announcements and Wednesday Email. Events are at Spencer unless otherwise specified.

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### Calendar of Events

December 9  
Council Meeting

December 10  
Mission Trip Meeting

December 14  
Blue Christmas

December 17  
Cross Training & LIVE  
Christmas Party

December 21  
Christmas Program  
No JAM or Mom's Connect

December 23  
COME Meal

December 24  
Christmas Eve Worship  
No Cross Training or LIVE

December 25  
Christmas Day Worship

December 28  
No JAM or Mom's Connect

## WHAT'S HAPPENING!

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." 1 John 1:7

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### Giving Tree

This Christmas season, we are supporting local families in need through our Giving Tree. The tree has 56 tags, with gift suggestions for anyone who would like to participate. Simply take a tag, purchase the gift, and return it under the tree on or before December 14. Thank you Lori Kops for making this possible.



### TO ENJOY FAMILY TIME

JAM will not meet on December 21 and 28.

Cross Training and LIVE will not meet on December 24.

Stay tuned for Cross Training and LIVE plans for December 31.



### FAMILY CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

December 21 during worship.

Everyone is invited to enjoy our Family Christmas Program during worship on December 21.



### COME Meal

December 23, 5 to 6pm

We are serving turkey mashed potatoes corn, cranberry sauce, bread, and Christmas cookies. Please help spread the word. Thank you!



### CHRISTMAS GOODIES NEEDED

December 24 & 25

If you would like to help provide hospitality following Christmas Eve and Day worship, please drop off Christmas goodies before December 23. Thank you!



### MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY

December 30, 6:30pm

Each last Tuesday of the month is a Bible study at 6:30 pm; for December 30<sup>th</sup> the group will compare Matthew 1 and Luke 1. This study does not require the purchase of materials as we are using the Bible as the resource each month. The group will pick the topic for the following month before departing the study in the current month. No need to sign up ahead of time; please just come if the last Tuesday of the month works in your schedule.

Youth Faith Formation Contact  
Jenny Nieman  
715-613-3636  
jennyfaith659@gmail.com

## YOUTH FAITH FORMATION

"You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings.  
And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

John 8:31-32 U

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### JAM — Jesus and Me

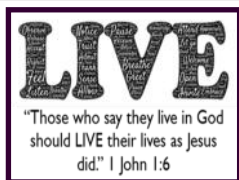
Advent is a time to prepare our hearts for Christmas; this Advent season JAM families will be given Advent journals to use at home. \*The Christmas program is on December 21, during 9 am worship, we will not have JAM this Sunday.

\*Family time is important, so we encourage all of you as well as our JAM teachers to spend time with family this Christmas season so we will not have JAM classes on December 28. JAM will resume on January 4.



### Cross Training & LIVE

December 17, we'll be celebrating with a Christmas Party, friends and family are invited! Parents- your kids are only this age once, so to encourage families to take the time together for Christmas we will not be meeting on Dec. 24.



### Wednesday Night Suppers Needed

Thank you to everyone who has provided meals from September through November, we truly appreciate your generosity. WOW! There are only 15 Wednesdays that need someone to provide a meal for the rest of the year!! If your family hasn't signed up yet, please sign up. You can pick the dates that work for you, you can do one of the duties or stay for all, it's your choice. Questions, talk with Jenny. Sign up online or on the bulletin board. [link](#)



### Districts Youth Gathering

January 9-11 in Green Bay. This weekend is filled with worship, prayer and break out session to learn more about faith topics, food, fun and fellowship. All middle school and high school youth are encouraged to attend. There are currently 11 youth registered. Contact Jenny Nieman before December 5th if you would like to join in the fun. 715-613-3636.



### Christmas in the Barn, Memory Lane Farms

You are invited to Memory Lane Farms, 5th annual Christmas in the Barn event on Friday, December 5 from 6-8 PM and Saturday, December 6, 2025 from 2-7 PM. This free community event will be held in their historic barn! The unique Christmas event is open for all ages, featuring a live Nativity, a walk through the streets of Bethlehem's markets, petting zoo, children's activities, mercantile with local artisan items, outdoor activities and more.

# MISSION TRIP

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew." 5:14-16

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## Mission Trip Planning Meeting

December 10 at 8pm

We're heading to Barnesville, MN July 19-26 for our week-long mission trip. The trip is open to any youth currently in 6<sup>th</sup> grade—adults. The next planning meeting is December 10, 8 pm. Applications are on the bulletin board. An application and a \$50 deposit are required to reserve your spot. If you would like more information, contact Jenny Nieman, 715-613-3636.



## 2026 Basket Raffle

The basket raffle will begin on February 18. If you would like to donate a themed basket for the raffle, the mission trip participants would be grateful! Baskets or items to add to a basket can be brought to church and placed in Jenny's office. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Jenny, 715-613-3636. Thank you for your support!



## Club 52 Fundraiser

Tahneya Anderson, Rachel Nieman, Adryan Schmidt, Wylie Seefeldt, Camdyn Vogel, Penni Cloud, Jenny Nieman and Nick Tomczik are the participants, so far, going on the mission trip. They will be sending out letters to family and friends asking for their support. If you would like to contribute to Club 52 there are Club 52 letters on the bulletin board, you can fill in a youth's name or if you leave it blank, and it will go to the fund for the entire trip. Thank you for your support!

## SCRIP St. John's Gift Card Program Information

*Scrip is an exciting way for our congregation to raise funds without having to sell merchandise.*

**Paper copy order forms are in the brochure rack, or by contacting the office. Instructions are on the back. Of order online using automatic withdraw or by submitting a check with your order.**

1. Login on [raiseright.com](https://raiseright.com)
2. Click on **"Create Account"**
3. Fill in the required information
4. Click **"I accept."**
5. St. John's enrollment code is **C99A97F23L251**.
6. Create two challenge questions
7. Place an order
8. Place payment in the black box outside the office or pay online.

**Orders & payment are due on the morning of the first & third Sunday. Cards are delivered to your mailbox the next Sunday.**

**All proceeds benefit community members in need.**

TURN SHOPPING INTO EARNING



Experience the right way to fundraise

Gift card fundraising is the best way to raise money. Buy gift cards from your favorite brands to earn on your daily purchases. It's never been easier to create opportunities for what matters most to you. No extra money spent. No extra time wasted.



For more information: reach out to Pam Hardrath. 715-507-0549 or [sjlcoffice13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcoffice13@gmail.com)



## LIVING WITH PURPOSE

Praising God, building relationships, and sharing the love of God. Together! This is a powerful foundation for our churches, and continues to guide and strengthen us as we move toward our future calling. Together— We can move mountains!

You may have seen our Purpose Statement around. Here is a refresher on how it began. It was adopted on March 25, 2017.

### Leadership Guidelines

**Purpose statement:** God's purpose for our church is Praising God, Building relationships and Sharing the love of God. Together!

### Guiding Principles:

- 1) Jesus is Lord and Savior
- 2) Growing in our relationship with God is lifelong
- 3) Our faith is lived out beyond our doors
- 4) We respect and care for each other
- 5) God's love and grace are for everyone.

**Essential Areas of focus** to make sure our church's purpose continues for the next generation:

- 1) **Worship** – continually elevating our worship to bring glory and honor to God and inspiration to those who gather.
- 2) **Small Groups** – a key part of building relationships is through small group studies which allow space for encouragement, accountability, and support.
- 3) **Children and Youth Ministry**
- 4) **Service Projects / Missions**

Focus areas: Local Hunger (COME, Food Pantry)  
World Hunger through the Globe  
Spencer kids

## FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER

"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13

### Point of Clarification

As outlined in Chapter 9.02 in our congregation constitution, the Call Committee recommends a pastoral candidate to the Congregation Council to propose via vote to the congregation. Due to atmosphere concerning council, the council relinquished their vote turning the pastoral candidate over to the congregation to vote. If you have questions or concerns please contact a member of council.

### Conflict Resolution

As you may have seen in the council meeting minutes, we are beginning a search for a 3<sup>rd</sup> party mediator to resolve the conflict within our congregation. This is the guidance received from the LCMC. Pastor Christan Huntley intended on visiting our congregation but has become busy. The council understands this will cost money as that is why it was not pursued before the roof replacement. Please continue prayers for our church. If you have any questions, please direct them to a council member.

Council Members are: Rudy Nieman; Todd Brinkman; Teri Schorer; Penni Cloud; Jenny Nieman; Randi Thompson; Travis Hardrath; Marsha Martens; and Nick Tomczik.



1 Donna Wenzel	15 Mary Ferhrenbach
3 Harper Reynolds	Carson Weyer
Malachi Anderson	16 Zoreyna Hardrath
Ralph Ottum	17 Ellen Brinkman
4 Todd Ertl	18 Trinity Crain
Jeff Weyer	Jake Reynolds
6 Trevor Ackman	24 Jackson Manicke
7 Ila Meacham	25 Rich Wilke
Michael Neumann	26 Jane Meacham
9 Raylan Burns	27 Judine Block
13 Juliet Ertl	29 Christopher Schmidt
14 Jessica Ertl	30 Corrie Bauer
David Lucht	Vicki Dekarske
	31 Randi Thompson



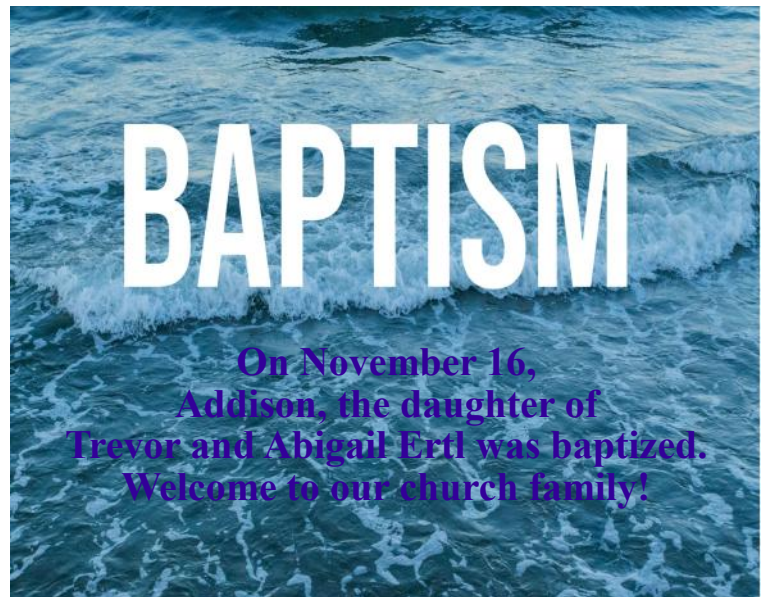
**May the love of Christ shine  
through your marriage!**

3 Doug & Jan Kopps	49 years
11 Keith & Trish Porter	30 years
18 Darlene & Roger Shupe	49 years
30 Jordan & Heather Vogel	19 years
31 Derek & Nicole Buse	9 years

*If your birthday or anniversary is  
missing or incorrect, please contact  
the office.*



Prayers of comfort are extended to the family and friends of Joan Miller, who now rests safely in the loving arms of our Lord. Joan went to her eternal home on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.



## PRAYER list

### IN OUR PRAYERS

**Those with short-term health concerns:** Skylee, Wayne Hempel, Susan Howe, Brett Kloth, Mia Maddox, Jim Miller, Randi Thompson.

**Those with long-term health concerns:** Audrey Heldt, Elroy Heldt, Sandy Lemmens, Bill Martens, Dorene Newman, Tammi Schiferl, Darrell Schillinger.

**Those with cancer:** Ross Rucker, Judi Andrew, Candyce DeNoble, Ruth Fleischman, Brenda

Gardner, Wayne Hendrickson, Sue Johnson, Penny Pieper, Michelle Oelke, Tom Steiner.

**Those who are homebound or in care facilities:** Lois Block, Audrey Helsten, Grace Maines, Pat Miller, Muriel Oelrich, Jim Schmutzler, Doris Seefeld.

**If you or a member of your family** are hospitalized, have an emergent need, or would like to update these prayer requests, please get in touch with Pam Hardrath at 715-507-0549 or [sjlcoffice13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcoffice13@gmail.com)



Please contact the office if you are available to serve in open spaces. Thank-you!  
[sjlcoffice13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcoffice13@gmail.com)




Date	December 7	December 14	December 21	December 28	January 4
Assisting	<b>NEEDED</b>	Ashley Stroetz			
Greeter	Randi Thompson	Bob & Glenda Fellenz	Faye Lang	Inez Fosberg Susan Howe	Bob Haas
Usher	Jim Christopherson	Harry Vogel	Joe Weix	Milt Viergutz	Brad Helsten
Usher	Brad Helsten	Paul Leezer	Travis Hardrath	Jim Christopherson	Paul Leezer
Tech	Jenny Nieman	Camdyn Vogel	Kyler Hardrath	Jenny Nieman	Tracey Ackman
Sound	Janika Helsten	Mason Gilmore	Ryan Hardrath	Liam Pluger	Mason Gilmore
Reader	Jim Christopherson	Glenda Fellenz	Amanda Nieman	Milt Viergutz	Hannah Rossow
Communion Assistant	Lori Helsten	Jule Vogel	Ashley Stroetz	Mary Seefeld	Lori Helsten
Basket Bearer	Zoey Hardrath	Cohley Vogel	Brooklyn Stroetz	Montana Tomczik	Brooklyn Stroetz
Hospitality	Penny Vinnedge	Jenny Nieman	Pam Hardrath	Krystle Tomczik	Hannah Rossow
Riplinger Reader	Dave Newman	Trish Porter	Ertl Family	Dec. 24 Dave Dec. 28 Heidi	Brenda Newman



Attendance	Spencer	Riplinger	Monday
October 5 & 6	28	9	12
October 12 & 13	45	18	12
October 19 & 20	54	23	13
October 26 & 27	63	25	13

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@StJohnsSpencer>



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>30</b> 9:00am Worship at Spencer 10:15am JAM & Mom's Connect 11:00am Worship at Riplinger	<b>1</b> 6:30pm Acts Bible Study 6:30pm Worship at Spencer	<b>2</b> 4:00pm Rising Dance Academy	<b>3</b> 9:00am Ezekiel Study 6:30pm Cross Training & LIVE	<b>4</b> 4:00pm Rising Dance Academy 5:30pm Secretary in Office	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:00am Worship at Spencer 10:15am JAM & Mom's Connect 11:00am Worship at Riplinger	<b>8</b> 6:30pm Acts Bible Study 6:30pm Worship at Spencer	<b>9</b> 4:00pm Rising Dance Academy 6:30pm Spencer Council Meeting	<b>10</b> 9:00am Ezekiel Study 6:30pm Cross Training & LIVE 8:00pm Mission Trip Meeting	<b>11</b> 4:00pm Rising Dance Academy 5:30pm Secretary in Office	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 8:00am VDC Ultreya
<b>14</b> 9:00am Worship at Spencer 10:15am JAM & Mom's Connect 11:00am Worship at Riplinger, Communion 6:00pm Blue Christmas	<b>15</b> 6:30pm Acts Bible Study 6:30pm Worship at Spencer	<b>16</b> 4:00pm Rising Dance Academy	<b>17</b> 9:00am Ezekiel Study 6:30pm Cross Training & LIVE Christmas Party	<b>18</b> 4:00pm Rising Dance Academy 5:30pm Secretary in Office 6:30pm OA Meeting	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 9:00am Worship at Spencer; Christmas Program 11:00am Worship at Riplinger	<b>22</b> 6:30pm Acts Bible Study 6:30pm Worship at Spencer	<b>23</b>  5:00pm C.O.M.E. Meal	<b>24</b> 2:00pm Candlelight Service at Riplinger 4:00pm Candlelight Service at Spencer 6:00pm Candlelight Service at Spencer	<b>25</b> 9:00am Christmas Worship at Spencer	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:00am Worship at Spencer 11:00am Worship at Riplinger	<b>29</b> 6:30pm Acts Bible Study 6:30pm Worship at Spencer	<b>30</b> 6:30pm Monthly Bible Study	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

## Spencer Council Contact Information

Council Chair: Rudy Nieman - 715-223-9579 - [rudynieman@yahoo.com](mailto:rudynieman@yahoo.com)  
 Vice Chair: Todd Brinkman - 715-212-1244 - [sjlcvicechair13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcvicechair13@gmail.com)  
 Treasurer: Teri Schorer - 715-613-8428 - [sjlcbooks@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcbooks@gmail.com)  
 Reporting Secretary: Penni Cloud - 715-223-5203 - [pennismiles@gmail.com](mailto:pennismiles@gmail.com)  
 Minister of Faith Formation: Jenny Nieman - 715-613-3636 - [jennyfaith659@gail.com](mailto:jennyfaith659@gail.com)  
 Worship Director: Randi Thompson - 715-659-4886 or 715-207-5857 - [randson80@yahoo.com](mailto:randson80@yahoo.com)  
 Buildings and Grounds Director: Travis Hardrath - 715-507-0548 - [tpkrh4@gmail.com](mailto:tpkrh4@gmail.com)  
 Congregation Care Director - Marsha Martens - 715-897-8426 - [mrshmrtns93@gmail.com](mailto:mrshmrtns93@gmail.com)  
 Beyond Our Doors Director: Nick Tomczik - 715-383-9083 - [sjlcbeyond13@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcbeyond13@gmail.com)  
 Financial Secretary: Kris Ovans - 715-507-0423 - [goobervns@hotmail.com](mailto:goobervns@hotmail.com)

## Riplinger Council Contact Information

President: Brenda Newman - 715-212-5886 - [riprider53@gmail.com](mailto:riprider53@gmail.com)  
 Vice President: John Meacham - 715-897-1044  
 Secretary: Trisha Porter - 715-255-8105 - [porter440@hotmail.com](mailto:porter440@hotmail.com)  
 Treasurer: Karla Kilty - 715-223-2021  
 Member 1: Jane Meacham - 715-897-6306  
 Member 2: Karla Kilty - 715-223-2021 or 715-255-3621  
 Member 3: Judine Block - 715-383-8025



## SHUT IN ADDRESSES

Lois Block  
 402 Dehne Dr  
 Colby, WI 54421

Audrey Helsten  
 106469 Highway 153  
 Spencer, WI 54479

Marshfield Health Services  
 Grace Maines  
 814 W. 14th Street Room 2  
 Marshfield, WI 54449

Pat Miller  
 N9934 Groveside Ave  
 Spencer, WI 54479

Muriel Oelrich  
 211763 Mystyc Ave  
 Spencer, WI 54479

Marshfield Health Services  
 Jim Schmutzler  
 814 W. 14th Street  
 Marshfield, WI 54449

Doris Seefeld  
 312 Dehne St  
 Colby, WI 54421

**Poinsettia Contribution Form**

If you would like to contribute toward the purchase of poinsettias complete this form and return it to the church office by Dec. 21. Cost: \$10 each (6.5 inch pot). Poinsettias may be taken home after Dec. 25 on a first come, first serve basis.

Name of person(s) ordering \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Poinsettias \_\_\_\_\_

Reason (i.e. In memory of; in honor of; in celebration of, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Poinsettia Sale

Support Spencer School's FFA program and help decorate the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve and Day. Poinsettias will be delivered to church and can be taken home on a first come, first serve basis following Christmas Day worship. Order forms are in the brochure rack and can be returned with payment to the black box next to the office door. Thank you!



# Bible Scavenger Hunt

## FOR ADVENT

Prepare for Christmas with this Bible-based Advent activity. Each day in December, look up the answer to one question.



**1** What will God's Son be called?  
(Isaiah 7:14)

**2** Where will Jesus reign?  
(Isaiah 9:7)

**3** Where will Jesus be born?  
(Micah 5:2)

**4** How many generations are between Abraham and the Christ?  
(Matthew 1:17)

**5** Who tells Mary she is having a baby?  
(Luke 1:26-31)

**6** Which relative of Mary is also having a baby?  
(Luke 1:41)

**7** What does Mary say that God has done for her?  
(Luke 1:49)

**8** Until his son John the Baptist is born, what can Zechariah not do?  
(Luke 1:20, 64)

**9** What does Jesus' name mean?  
(Matthew 1:21)

**10** Who issues the decree about a census?  
(Luke 2:1)

**11** From where do Joseph and Mary start their journey to Bethlehem?  
(Luke 2:4)

**12** What does Mary use to wrap up baby Jesus?  
(Luke 2:7)

**13** What serves as Jesus' first bed?  
(Luke 2:7)

**14** Who tells the shepherds the good news about Jesus' birth?  
(Luke 2:8-12)

**15** When the shepherds tell others about Jesus, how do people react?  
(Luke 2:8-12)

**16** On what day is Jesus presented in the temple?  
(Luke 2:21)

**17** From what direction do the wise men (or Magi) come to worship Jesus?  
(Matthew 2:1-2)

**18** Who is upset to hear about a newborn King?  
(Matthew 2:3)

**19** What three gifts does Jesus receive from the wise men?  
(Matthew 2:11)

**20** Where does Joseph flee with his family for safety?  
(Matthew 2:14)

**21** When does Jesus' family return to Israel?  
(Matthew 2:19-21)

**22** In what district does Jesus grow up?  
(Matthew 2:22)

**23** What free gift does God give us through Jesus, his Son?  
(1 John 5:11)

**24** Where do all our gifts come from?  
(James 1:17)

**25** How should we respond to our gifts?  
(2 Corinthians 9:15)

Answers: 1. Immanuel 2. On David's throne 3. Bethlehem 4. 42 5. The angel Gabriel 6. Elizabeth 7. Great things 8. Speak 9. He will save his people from their sins 10. Caesar Augustus 11. Nazareth, in Galilee 12. Cloths, or swaddling clothes 13. A manger 14. An angel of the Lord 15. They are amazed, or in wonder 16. The eighth 17. The east 18. Herod 19. Gold, frankincense and myrror 20. Egypt 21. After Herod dies 22. Galilee 23. Eternal life 24. From above, from the Father of lights 25. Give thanks to God!



A gift card program that supports donations to community families in need.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

DINING OUT	Amt	X Qty	Total
Applebee's	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
	\$50.00		
Arby's	\$10.00		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
Chili's Grill & Bar	\$25.00		
	\$50.00		
Dairy Queen	\$10.00		
Dunkin' Doughnuts	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
Hardee's	\$10.00		
Jimmy John's	\$25.00		
McDonald's	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
Olive Garden	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
Papa Murphy's Pizza	\$10.00		
Pizza Hut	\$10.00		
Pizza Ranch	\$25.00		
Red Robin	\$25.00		
Starbucks	\$5.00		
	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
SUBWAY	\$10.00		
	\$50.00		
Taco Bell	\$5.00		
	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
Texas Roadhouse	\$25.00		
GAS STATIONS			
Genex	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
Kwik Trip	\$25.00		
	\$50.00		
	\$100.00		

GROCERIES	Amt	X Qty	Total
Festival Foods	\$25.00		
	\$50.00		
	\$100.00		
Pick 'N Save	\$25.00		
	\$50.00		
	\$100.00		
ONLINE	Amt	X Qty	Total
Amazon.com	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
Apple	\$15.00		
	\$25.00		
	\$25.00		
Shutterfly	\$25.00		
RETAIL STORES	Amt	X Qty	Total
Aeropostale	\$25.00		
American Eagle Outfitters	\$25.00		
Barnes & Noble Booksellers	\$5.00		
	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
Bath & Body Works	\$10.00		
	\$25.00		
	\$25.00		
Bed Bath & Beyond	\$25.00		
Best Buy	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
	\$250.00		
Buckle	\$25.00		
Cabela's	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
<del>Costco</del>	<del>\$25.00</del>		
Dunham's Sports	\$25.00		
Game Stop	\$25.00		
Gap	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
Great Clips	\$25.00		
<del>Home Depot</del>	<del>\$25.00</del>		
Kohl's	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
L.L. Bean	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
Land's End	\$25.00		
	\$100.00		
Lane Bryant	\$25.00		

[illegible]

To ensure Christmas Delivery, please submit your order on or before December 14th. Thank you!  
Checks can be made out to St. John's. Order forms and payment can be put in the black mailbox next to the office door. Thank you!

# SPENCER COUNCIL MINUTES

St. John's Lutheran Church, Spencer Council Meeting roles.  
Minutes, October 7, 2025, 6:30 pm.

**Attending:** Jenny Nieman, Penni Cloud, Marsha Martens, Nick Tomczik, Todd Brinkman, Teri Schorer, Rudy Nieman, Travis Hardrath

**Absent:** Randi Thompson

**Guest:** Pam Hardrath

**Call to Order** by Rudy Nieman at 6:30 pm

**Opening Devotion:** by Teri Schorer from 1 Corinthians 12; unity in the body of Christ

**Approval of September Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made by Teri Schorer to approve September minutes with corrections that she presented, second by Marsha Martens. Motion approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** The 2nd and 3rd quarter tithes were paid. 2nd quarter tithe was sent to Interfaith Volunteers of Clark County and 3rd quarter tithe was sent to 89Q Radio Station.

## Old Business:

**Proposed Constitution Discussion** – Teri Schorer presented the Proposed Constitution; council discussed the proposal. Todd Brinkman made a motion to present the Proposed Constitution changes to the congregation on Oct. 8; 2nd by Nick Tomczik. Motion carried. The Proposed Constitution changes will be emailed to the congregation on Oct 8; printed in the November newsletter; paper copies will be available in the brochure rack and included in the giving statements.

## New Business:

**Call Committee Report** – The committee is continuing their work of interviewing candidates.

Travis Hardrath motioned to have the Annual meeting on January 25, 2026. Marsha Martens 2nd; motion carried.

**LCMC- Lutheran Men & Women of the Word** how can St. John's promote some involvement or rekindling of the Men's Group & Women's Group.

**LCMC National/Annual Convention-** As members of the LCMC, St. John's can send delegates to next year's annual convention, begin thinking about who to ask if they would consider attending.

**LCMC App-** An App is available for information, council to promote the use of the App.

**Council Nominations/Mentoring (2026)-** council is encouraged to begin praying and looking for nominees and younger people to mentor into those

**God Sightings/Gratitude outside of church-** A few council members shared some God sightings.

Next Meeting: November 11, 2025 at 6:30pm

Motion to Adjourn: Made by Travis Hardrath, second by Marsha Martens. Motion Approved.

Lord's Prayer Closing

Respectfully submitted: Jenny Nieman filling in for Penni Cloud

## St. John's Lutheran Church, Spencer Special Meeting Minutes, November 2, 2025

Called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Rudy Nieman.

Prayer by Rudy Nieman.

Rudy Nieman reviewed criteria to be a voting member.

Clip boards passed around for voting members to sign in on.

## DISCUSSION:

Charla Hagen introduced the Spencer call committee members.

Charla Hagen shared that Pastor Cole was interested in being our pastor to be closer to family and that his short-term call in North Dakota was due to leadership changes in the church in January where he was not given a say in the congregation changes.

Charla Hagen asked if there were any questions with none raised.

Rudy Nieman shared that Spencer congregation needs to have 2/3 majority yes and that both congregations must vote yes for the pastoral candidate. Should both churches not vote yes, churches could unyoke, there could be a revote, or the call committee would meet to bring a new candidate forward to vote for.

Zoom time was set for 10:30 a.m.

Hannah Rossow motioned to have a 10 minutes recess. Darin Thompson second with majority in favor.

10:29 a.m. back in session with Zoom meeting occurring.

Bruce Leupke questioned Pastor Cole's feelings on contemporary service. Charla Hagen shared that he is



flexible with style of service.

Ashley Stroetz questioned if he would be a good fit and if he would be involved with the youth. Charla Hagen and Glenda Fellenz shared that Pastor Cole was honest with interview questions, that he wants to be involved in all ministries but would not make changes during the first year as per interview responses.

Faye Lang stated the church determines the style of service and council has their mind made up.

Dave Lucht stated he feels as though the minister needs to lead us, show us, and have a vote. He also stated that the council needs to listen.

Volunteer to count votes taken and roles filled by Joan Bruss, Cindy Weiler, and Travis Hardrath.

Ashley Stroetz made a motion to open voting with second by Cindy Weiler. Motion approved. Ballots were handed out.

All ballots were collected.

Motion to close voting made by Darin Thompson with second by Wayne Vaughan. Motion approved.

All ballots counted.

At 10:53 a.m. Cindy Weiler shared vote counts of 48 yes votes and 17 no votes; with 2/3 of votes needing to be greater than 43.3.

Riplinger congregation votes after their church services today.

Email will be sent with results of both congregations.

Charla Hagen shared that should the vote be favorable there will be open house with Pastor Cole and his wife Monday, 11/3/25, and Tuesday, 11/4/25, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn: Made by Heather Vogel, second by Travis Hardrath. Motion Approved. Closed with The Lord's Prayer  
Respectfully submitted: Penni Cloud

### **St. John's Lutheran Church, Spencer Special Meeting Minutes for Council restructure vote, November 16, 2025**

Rudy Nieman called meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Clipboards passed around to record voting member attendance.

Rudy Nieman shared there will be no amendments or

corrections and the council restructure will either be tabled or voted on.

Teri Schorer introduced Council Restructure Task Force committee members.

Teri Schorer presented proposed changes using slide show and handout showing current council structure and proposed council structure.

Q&A: Gail Jicinsky voiced her support in the work that has been done. Kris Ovans questioned paid employees not being on the board meaning. Teri Schorer explained that paid members will no longer be part of the board but can be should they desire, as long as there's not a conflict of interest.

Ballots distributed.

Volunteered counters: Tracey Ackman, Glenda Fellenz, and Jackie Soback

Charla Hagen motioned to open voting, second by Tracey Ackman. Motion approved.

Wayne Hagen motioned to close voting, second by Joe Weix. Motion approved.

All votes collected and counted.

Council restructure proposal passed with the following votes: 39 yes, 11 no, and 1 abstain. There were 51 voting members.

Harry Vogel motioned to adjourn, second by Tracey Ackman. Motion approved.  
Closed with The Lord's Prayer.  
Respectfully submitted: Penni Cloud



# SPENCER TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer's Report as of October 2025 for General Operating Fund

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

Page 1 of 2

Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget
<b>Income</b>				
410.010	Tithes & Offerings	7,999.33	75,249.61	130,000.00
410.011	Non-tithe Offerings General Fund	215.00	8,135.00	
410.050	Riplinger Reimbursements	416.89	4,922.31	6,500.00
441.060	Building use	0.00	700.00	2,500.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$8,631.22</b>	<b>\$89,006.92</b>	<b>\$139,000.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
500.000	<i>Wider Mission</i>			
500.010	Tithe	0.00	6,256.92	13,000.00
<i>Total Wider Mission</i>		<i>\$0.00</i>	<i>\$6,256.92</i>	<i>13,000.00</i>
510.000	<i>Worship</i>			
510.030	Copyrights	0.00	336.00	1,000.00
510.050	Community Worship Services	0.00	0.00	850.00
510.070	Instrument maintenance/service	0.00	0.00	200.00
510.100	Worship Supplies	78.63	253.96	1,000.00
<i>Total Worship</i>		<i>\$78.63</i>	<i>\$589.96</i>	<i>3,050.00</i>
510.020	Pulpit Supply	150.00	250.00	8,000.00
510.060	Worship - Music/Special Events	400.00	400.00	750.00
520.000	<i>Faith Development</i>			
520.010	Birth to 3	0.00	0.00	300.00
520.020	Children's Ministry (SS, VBS, GIFT, etc)	0.00	(100.00)	1,100.00
520.030	Middle School (Cross Training, Youth, etc)	0.00	166.50	500.00
520.040	High School (discipleship, chaperones, grads)	(25.00)	199.22	1,000.00
520.050	Adult Faith Formation	(8.00)	194.49	250.00
520.070	Library Resources	0.00	3.32	100.00
<i>Total Faith Development</i>		<i>(\$33.00)</i>	<i>\$463.53</i>	<i>3,250.00</i>
530.000	<i>Social Concerns</i>			
530.010	Kitchen License/COME	0.00	622.00	
<i>Total Social Concerns</i>		<i>\$0.00</i>	<i>\$622.00</i>	
540.000	<i>Fellowship &amp; Care</i>			
540.010	Hospitality & Kitchen Supplies	125.00	507.94	650.00
540.020	Care Resources	0.00	397.34	500.00
540.030	Events	0.00	0.00	300.00
<i>Total Fellowship &amp; Care</i>		<i>\$125.00</i>	<i>\$905.28</i>	<i>1,450.00</i>
560.000	<i>Office</i>			
560.010	Office Supplies (shared)	197.75	782.33	750.00
560.020	Telephone & Internet (shared)	190.28	1,902.76	2,200.00
560.030	Postage (shared)	0.00	547.12	750.00
560.050	Copier Maintenance (shared)	128.25	1,700.49	2,300.00
560.060	Office Subscriptions, Software, Upgrades (shared)	0.00	1,383.96	1,500.00
<i>Total Office</i>		<i>\$516.28</i>	<i>\$6,316.66</i>	<i>7,500.00</i>
570.000	<i>Administration</i>			
570.010	Offering Envelopes	0.00	0.00	0.00
570.020	Vanco Electronic Giving Fees	136.02	1,135.97	1,200.00
570.040	Insurance & Workman's Compensation	0.00	9,386.26	7,500.00
570.050	Mileage Reimbursement (shared)	0.00	0.00	400.00
<i>Total Administration</i>		<i>\$136.02</i>	<i>\$10,522.23</i>	<i>9,100.00</i>

St. John's Lutheran Church - Spencer WI  
Treasurer's Report as of October 2025 for General Operating Fund

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

Page 2 of 2

Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget
<b>580.000</b>	<b>Buildings &amp; Grounds</b>			
580.020	Electricity	361.84	3,588.38	4,500.00
580.030	Natural Gas	41.12	2,333.08	2,000.00
580.040	Holding Tanks	185.00	370.00	900.00
580.050	Waste Disposal	174.76	1,685.05	1,800.00
580.065	Cleaning	0.00	527.61	700.00
580.070	Repairs & General Maintenance Expenses	0.00	3,627.67	2,000.00
580.080	Snow Removal	0.00	3,120.00	2,500.00
580.090	Lawn Mowing- Church	74.19	511.31	450.00
580.100	Cemetery Assoc Lawn Care	0.00	0.00	500.00
	<b>Total Buildings &amp; Grounds</b>	<b>\$836.91</b>	<b>\$15,763.10</b>	<b>15,350.00</b>
<b>590.000</b>	<b>Staff</b>			
590.110	Pastor Compensation	0.00	0.00	26,555.00
590.120	Housing Allowance (Pastor)	0.00	0.00	11,550.00
590.130	Books & Subscriptions (Pastor-shared)	0.00	0.00	100.00
590.140	Continuing Education (Pastor-shared)	0.00	0.00	750.00
590.150	Medical Insurance & Pension (Pastor)	0.00	0.00	4,350.00
590.160	Social Security Allowance (Pastor)	0.00	87.74	3,395.00
590.170	Synod & Official Meetings (Pastor-shared)	0.00	0.00	750.00
590.210	FICA	144.83	1,383.62	2,600.00
590.230	Organist Payroll	0.00	0.00	2,600.00
590.240	Treasurer Payroll	150.00	1,500.00	1,800.00
590.250	Secretary Payroll (shared)	1,365.00	12,621.00	15,600.00
	<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>\$1,659.83</b>	<b>\$15,592.36</b>	<b>70,050.00</b>
590.280	Minister of Faith Formation Payroll	378.25	3,965.25	7,500.00
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,247.92</b>	<b>\$61,647.29</b>	<b>\$139,000.00</b>
	<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$4,383.30</b>	<b>\$27,359.63</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>



St. John's Lutheran Church - Spencer WI  
Consolidated Fund Activity Report for October 2025

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

Page 1 of 1

Account #	Account Name	Beg Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers/JE's	End Balance
<b>301.000</b>	<b>General Fund Balance</b>					
301.100	General Balance	58,406.77	8,631.22	4,247.92	0.00	62,790.07
<b>302.000</b>	<b>Special Funds Balance</b>					
302.001	ARK Balance	675.87	2.00	0.00	0.00	677.87
302.102	Globe Money Balance	483.53	2.00	0.00	0.00	485.53
302.120	Technology Balance	2,435.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,435.90
302.138	Bible Camp Balance	3,728.87	262.00	0.00	0.00	3,990.87
302.145	Mission Trip Balance	1,240.61	50.00	0.00	0.00	1,290.61
302.155	Kitchen Equipment Balance	306.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	306.00
302.180	COME Balance	667.90	233.00	0.00	0.00	900.90
302.800	Seminary Fund Balance	2,039.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,039.91
302.100	Memorial Gifts Balance	5,474.03	0.00	22.14	0.00	5,451.89
302.105	Building Fund Balance	6,977.96	695.00	0.00	0.00	7,672.96
303.000	Thrivent (Savings Acct) Balance	7,315.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,315.99
304.000	Sabbatical (Forward Fin.) Balance	1,539.62	0.19	0.00	0.00	1,539.81
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$91,292.96</b>	<b>\$9,875.41</b>	<b>\$4,270.06</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$96,898.31</b>