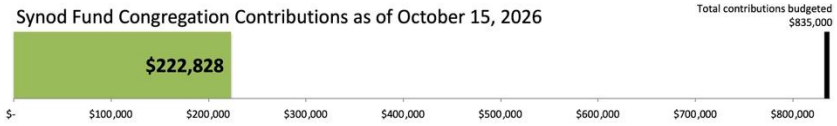
ELS Giving Counselor Position
The ELS Board of Trustees is seeking a new Giving Counselor. The board will either call a pastor from our fellowship or hire a layman. We are currently seeking interested laymen to make application for this position through our Executive Assistant, Elsa Ferkenstad (elsynod@blc.edu). Please include a cover letter and your resumé. A job description is available at www.els.org/employment. Applications will be accepted through November 30, 2026.

ELS in Action Video
Join host Nate Abrahamson and visit Waukon, Iowa for "Pumpkins in the Park." Visit: www.els.org/elsinaction.



ELS Military Monument Pavers
Veterans Day is observed each November. Many ELS men and women in our congregations and families have served in the military and made sacrifices for our nation. One way to show appreciation for their service is to include their names at the ELS Military Monument on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College. Personalized engraved pavers can be purchased. For information, please visit els.org/monument or contact Rev. Ken Mellon by email kenmellonj1@gmail.com or phone: 262-675-4144.

Upcoming Events
November 8–9 – Board of Regents
November 11 – Board of Trustees
November 12–13 – Board for Home Outreach
November 17–18 – Board for World Outreach
November 24 – Planning & Coordinating Committee
December 25 – Christmas Day



ELS Newsletter

Evangelical Lutheran Synod
6 Browns Court
Mankato, Minnesota 56001
elsynod@blc.edu

November 2026

Thanksgiving as a national holiday is somewhat unique in the world. Relatively few countries—fewer than a dozen—have an official day set aside to give thanks. In the US, the roots of Thanksgiving go back to the days of the Pilgrims, but it wasn't until Pres. Lincoln made the decree in 1863 that "Thanksgiving" became an annual national holiday.

A pastor once complained that the church really shouldn't celebrate Thanksgiving as a festival by having Thanksgiving Eve or Day services since it's not a religious holiday but a secular one. Maybe he had a point. However, there were two biblical festivals that focused on giving thanks to God: the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and the Feast of Tabernacles. And since we don't tend to celebrate either of those *as* days to give thanks to God, it's OK that we appropriate the day of national thanksgiving as a day to give thanks to the one true God.

Whether or not you attend a Thanksgiving worship service doesn't determine your level of thankfulness. Think of the prayer many use every day: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good! For his mercy endures forever" (Ps 136:1). God is always deserving of our thanks because he is merciful, giving us everything we need for this body and life, but especially for giving us eternal life through the work of his Son, our Savior. God deserves our thanks *every* day, not just the fourth Thursday of November.

Michael K. Smith

Anniversary at Pinewood

Pinewood Lutheran Church, Burlington, MA celebrated its 50th anniversary in its present location on Sunday, October 18, 2026. The congregation began in 1884 and has moved locations twice. The service centered on the theme, "I Will Sing My Maker's Praises" (ELH #448). Pinewood's pastor, Rev. Michael Dale, conducted the service and sang three verses of the theme hymn as a solo. Synod president Rev. Dr. Michael K. Smith preached the sermon. The service was followed by a catered lunch and program.



Mission Rally at Princeton

Bethany – Princeton, MN was the site of the Circuit 7 Ladies' Mission Rally on Saturday, October 24, 2026. Rev. Jay Webber, BWO Administrator, gave an overview of world outreach work in the synod. Pres. Michael K. Smith spoke about the synod and the president's role. Carol Webber made a presentation about raising a family in the mission field. The ladies of Bethany served a wonderful lunch. Over $2800 was given as an offering for various mission projects. Next year's Circuit 7 rally will be hosted by Gloria Dei – Cold Spring, MN.



Bethany's Centennial Timeline Highlights a Century of God's Blessings

As Bethany Lutheran College celebrates its centennial, a new permanent historical timeline in Honsey Hall offers an opportunity to reflect on God's blessings and faithfulness throughout the college's first 100 years.

Featuring 26 historical entries, the expansive display traces Bethany's history through significant events and milestones. From the faithful efforts of early supporters who helped secure the college's future in 1926 and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod's assumption of ownership in 1927, to the introduction of Bethany's seal, the construction of the campus stairway and stone entrance gates, and the dedication of Trinity Chapel, the timeline tells the story of a college sustained by God's grace and the dedication of generations of faithful supporters.

During this centennial year, Bethany invites ELS members, alumni, and friends to visit campus, explore the timeline, and join in giving thanks to God for a century of Christian education and the many blessings He has bestowed upon the college.



God's Blessings



Rejoice with Ascension! On October 18, Dan (blue shirt) and Jamie (lady in dark top) were baptized by Rev. Joe Burkhardt at Ascension-St. Helens, OR. Dan, a homeless man who lives in a tent near the church, has continued to express his joy at being baptized and rejoices in the comfort it gives him. Pastor Burkhardt is continuing instruction with Dan who wants to be a communicant member of Ascension.