



Our Church—This Week
for January 22, 2024

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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FIRST LUTHERAN MONN MOUTH

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Congregation Council

President: Pam Van Kirk

Vice President: Ray Golden

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Pam Best

Adam Sanberg

Mark Shrader

Chip Algren

Brian Elliott

** one seat remains vacant in honor of Evelyn Volz, until our next election meeting in May, 2024

Dear Friends and Family,

Well, this week I head to Texas for an ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering.

At this event, aside from learning many new things about world hunger ministries, the ELCA is celebrating 50 years of World Hunger ministry. I am looking forward to being at this event and sharing all I learn when I return.

While I am gone, pastoral care will be available by Pastor Katie Gallagher. If you have a pastoral care need, you may call her at 630-200-3288.

And while the church office will be closed this week, if you need to reach me for an office need, you may email me or text me. When I am not in a ministry session, I will have time to reply to your questions and help you with what you need.

And I promise to not enjoy the warmer Texas weather too much while I am gone.

Worship on Sunday, February 4th will be led by Heide Gallagher, who is currently taking a synod provided class for lay-preachers. I am so excited that you all get to hear her first sermon.

Boy Scout Pancake Supper



The Boy Scout Troop 705 will host a Mardi Gras Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 13th. We will serve from 5 PM to 7 PM in the fellowship room here at First Lutheran.

More details about the dinner will come out in the upcoming weeks. This is a fundraising event to help raise scholarship funds for the troop to help offset the annual cost for participation in scouting.

Scouting is a youth organization for both boys and girls. Scouting teaches leadership, citizenship, and outdoor skills. Scouting values inclusivity and is open to all youth.

The troop meets regularly on Sunday evenings at 6 PM and has monthly outdoor activities (weather permitting).

For more information about our scouting program, talk with Pastor Jamie, who serves as the scoutmaster of the troop.



Lutheran World Relief

In 2023, LWR gathered over 551,700 quilts and kits which were distributed in 14 countries. The breakdown is 194,983 quilts, 190,043 school kits, 123,920 personal care kits, 35,490 baby care kits, and 7,264 fabric kits.

First Lutheran Church donated many quilts and kits to these totals. Here are just a couple quick stories from LWR about the distribution of these quilts and kits:

In Tanzania, one-third of children are stunted due to chronic malnutrition in their early years. Stunting is more than being short. It prevents a child from reaching their potential in almost every way. In the colder Njombe region, a study revealed children were burning too many calories trying to keep warm rather than to grow. Thanks to your handiwork, more than 9,000 children now have cozy quilts to help them grow strong and healthy.

In Ukraine, your quilts and kits are part of a massive humanitarian response that is reaching your neighbors when they need it most. Families who fled to shelters brought few comforts with them. Those who stayed behind face supply shortages, power outages and destruction of their homes. Your handmade gifts are both useful and a reminder that even in the midst of crisis, they are loved.

You can follow LWR on Facebook at facebook.com/LuthWorldRelief

Or watch videos on YouTube at youtube.com/LutheranWorldRelief

Learn more at LWR.org

So That's My Bible – Bible Study

Join us for a new Sunday Bible Study beginning on February 11th after worship.

We will be learning about how the Bible came to us, while also discovering some hidden gems of stories in the Bible, such as the time Eutychus fell out of a window while Paul was preaching.

It is a funny story, especially when you find out Paul was not interested in how the young man recovered, he basically said the kid was fine, and returned to preaching. Not your typical Bible story. So why is it in the book of Acts? Join us and learn more about this story and about how the Bible came to us today.

Global Refuge is the new name for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services

LIRS has adopted a new name. It is now officially called Global Refuge. The name comes from Psalm 46, "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble."

From their pamphlet, here is what Global Refuge has to say about its ministry:

"Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is now Global Refuge, a nonprofit serving newcomers seeking safety, support, and a share in the American dream. For 85 years, we have welcomed more than 750,000 of those seeking refuge from around the globe, upholding a legacy of compassion and grace for people in crisis. We walk alongside individuals, families, and children as they begin their new lives in the United States through our work in refugee resettlement, welcome and respite services for asylum seekers, economic empowerment and employment, and family unification for unaccompanied children.

"At Global Refuge, welcoming newcomers isn't just our duty — it's an inherent part of our identity, rooted in our Lutheran heritage and inspired values and serving as a testament to our unwavering commitment to those in search of refuge."

For more information about Global Refuge and how to support it's ministries, go to globalrefuge.org

The Chosen TV Show watch party

We continue to watch the TV series "The Chosen" on Wednesdays at 10 AM. We will not meet on Wednesday, January 31, however, as Pastor is out of town this week.

We will resume the watch party on Wednesday, February 7th. And continue through Lent, even on Ash Wednesday.

For information on how to catch up on the series or how to watch the series at home on a streaming service, please contact Pastor Jamie.



**Season of Epiphany
Sunday, January 7 through
Sunday February 11**

A new Mission Statement is coming for our congregation.

The council is waiting to affirm this statement from our studies, at the moment it reads:

Gathered by God, we live our faith with compassion, gratitude, and joy.

In Lent, we will have a worship sermon series on this statement and how this statement is a reflection of our identity.

Thank you again for your participation and conversation in the studies that helped the council develop this statement. Once affirmed, it will become a header on our newsletter, bulletin, and other print and social medias. This mission identity will help the council evaluate current ministries and develop new ministries, all in the hopes of impacting the world through the Word of God in Jesus Christ.

Worship Guild Members

Feb 4 — Epiphany 5

Usher: Pam Best
Reader: Trace Gallagher
Com Asst: N/A
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

Feb 11 — Transfiguration of the Lord

Usher: Kurt Volz
Reader: Maddie Blaesing
Com Asst: Julie Blaesing
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

WEDNESDAY Feb 14 — Ash Wednesday

Usher: Ray Golden
Reader: Pam Van Kirk
Com Asst: Chip Algren
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

Feb 18 — Lent 1

Usher: Diane Carlson
Reader: Pam Best
Com Asst: Adam Sanberg
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren



What is the Northern Illinois Synod

In short, the NIS is one of 65 regional subdivisions of the ELCA. The NIS is almost all of Northern Illinois, excluding just three counties around Chicago.

There are 140 congregations in our synod. Our current bishop is Rev. Stacie Fidler. The Synod coordinates multiple ministries across the synod, including learning events like the Congregational Resource Event in March. The synod receives mission support from congregations and sees that it is used for supporting multiple ministries that we all support together.

Attending synod gatherings like the annual assembly and CRE helps us to remember we are not alone, that we walk together this journey with many others.

Mark your Calendars: Lent is Coming

Here are some important worship days and times to be aware of as we head into Lent.

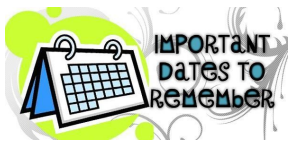
Wednesday, February 14 is Ash Wednesday. We will have worship at 6 PM.

There will be no midweek Lent worship services. Join us Sundays for the "So That's My Bible" Bible study.

Palm Sunday is March 24th.

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship will be 6 PM on both March 28th and March 29th.

Easter Sunday is March 31st.



Every Sunday
9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering
10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, January 21st Season after Epiphany
 Wed, Jan 24 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sunday, January 28th Season after Epiphany
 Sun, Jan 28 11:15 AM RESCHEDULED
 Annual Meeting

Tues, Jan 29 to Monday, February 5
 Pastor Jamie attends ELCA World Hunger Event in Houston, TX

Sunday, February 4th Season after Epiphany
 Mon, Feb 5 9:30 AM Sarah Circle
 7 PM Building/Grounds meeting
 Wed, Feb 7 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sunday, February 11th Transfiguration Sunday
 Sun, Feb 11 11:15 AM Bible Study
 Tue, Feb 13 5 PM to 7 PM Pancake Supper
 Wed, Feb 14 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party
 6 PM Ash Wednesday worship
 Thur, Feb 15 6 PM Council meeting

Notice something missing from the calendar? Please contact the church office, and we will add it to next week's newsletter.

Pastor Jamie's typical day off is Friday, though with covering occasional office duties, this time off may vary throughout the week. You are always welcome to call Pastor Jamie on his cell phone.



- Jan 30 Kay Lovdahl
- Jan 30 Melba Matson
- Feb 11 Becky Terpening
- Feb 15 Ross Beedle
- Feb 17 Keirstyn Johnson
- Feb 17 Gary Martin
- Feb 18 Mary Jane Olson
- Feb 19 Janet Lowe
- Feb 26 Teresa Miller
- Feb 27 Heidi Niemann
- Feb 28 Connie Larimer
- Mar 2 Dana Jensen
- Mar 7 Dawn Johnson
- Mar 7 Pam Van Kirk
- Mar 9 Helen Babcock
- Mar 13 Joey Slater
- Mar 20 Dee Dee Yez
- Mar 25 Heather Ide
- Mar 27 Phil Bergren
- Mar 27 Kurt Volz
- Mar 30 Anna Lovdahl
- Apr 4 Marly Dobry
- Apr 5 Deb Manuel



- Feb 22 Kenny & Nancy Reynolds
- Mar 1 Phil & Trudy Bergren
- Mar 11 Cecil & Kay Lovdahl
- Mar 14 Tammy & Jim Slater
- Apr 2 Don & Kathy Fillman
- Apr 25 Todd & Kris Champion
- Apr 28 Ron & Deb Manuel
- May 5 Brenda & Craig Jones
- May 6 Connie & Chuck Larimer
- May 21 Ted & Sue Hanson
- May 22 Butch & Kaye Johnson
- June 1 Rodger & Linda Ellison
- June 4 Gary & Judy Sanberg
- June 8 Ben & Jenny Sanberg
- June 11 DeeDee & David Yez
- June 12 Neal & Jackie Heerwagen
- Jun 13 Michael & Barb Pearson
- Jun 14 Doug & Kathi Cruce
- Jun 15 Rob & Tammy Ravel
- Jun 19 Stan & Diane Carlson
- Jun 23 Mike and Susie Jurgens

Our celebrations list reflect current membership. To request someone not on our current membership list be added to our celebration lists, please contact the church office.

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Emily Agema, Gary Eyler, Cecil Lovdahl, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Reva Stachinew, John Van Kirk, Hannah Taylor

Please let the church office know any updates that are needed to our prayer list.

Vision and Purpose Giving

Our Vision & Purpose



Endowment Matching Funds for Vision and Purpose

The Endowment Fund Committee is promoting our Vision and Purpose monthly giving by giving automatically each month \$100. Then—based on the giving of congregation members, the committee will also match an additional \$150 of giving. This means, if the congregation gives \$150 a month to vision and purpose, the total amount given to the fund will be \$400.

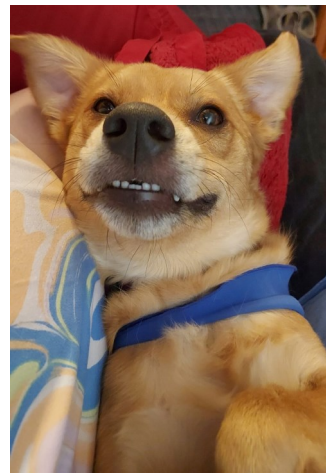
So—how will you support the Vision and Purpose giving this month?

We will start our year once again supporting the Western Illinois Animal Rescue. This shelter located here in Monmouth houses cats and dogs until they are able to be adopted into forever homes. Volunteers help the center by daily playing with the cats and dogs and helping with feeding and other necessary tasks. The shelter provides for veterinary care through a local vet's office.

Our donations will help WIAR with those vet costs, providing appropriate food and other supplies needed for the pets.

Have you ever adopted a pet from WIAR? Pastor Jamie's family dog, Niko, came from the shelter. Who could resist such a cutie as this?

Thank you for supporting WIAR this month with our vision and purpose giving.



Weekly Devotional



But Saul, also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, — Acts 13:9a

This brief portion of a verse tells us that a man named Saul, who once persecuted the church and has now become a missionary for the church, is also named Paul. We certainly know Paul from all the letters contained in the New Testament that he wrote or is said to have written. We know the story that Paul, known by Saul, traveled to Damascus with permission from the Sanhedrin to round up followers of Jesus and bring them to trial for their blasphemy. Yet, while on that trip, he was blinded in an encounter with the Risen Jesus. Saul was led into Damascus where he met a man named Ananias who baptized Saul and then Saul would go on to learn and grow as a disciple and the rest of the story as we know it.

There is a current social media meme going around suggesting that if we can call Paul by that name, then we know how not to address an individual by their “dead name”. The expression “dead name” refers to a name a child is given when born but is changed to a new name when the individual changes their name for an identity relating to their gender identity which may be different than their gender identity given at birth.

One thing about this meme is true, the other is inaccurate at best. First what is true—when it comes to someone who is LGBTQIA+, particularly someone who is transgendered and that person has a name change, it is absolutely correct that we use the new name for that individual. Take for example my cousin who I knew growing up as Chris. Chris now uses the name Tina, and so when I reference my cousin I no longer use the name Chris, I use the name Tina. That is appropriate, and the loving response to my cousin. Just as it is for all people who have a name, it is appropriate and loving to use their name.

What is inaccurate about this meme is that Saul is a “dead name” for Paul. The correct understanding is Saul and Paul are the same person, one name is used as his Jewish name “Saul” and the other is his Roman name “Paul” and it depended on which circle he was in at the moment as to which name he used. That means Saul and Paul are interchangeable names, you can call the evangelist by either name and it is okay. That is obviously not the same thing as addressing someone by their “dead name”. My cousin is not Chris. My cousin is Tina. It is not appropriate for me to use the name Chris in conversation about her, or when I speak to her. A “dead name” may yet be a part of an individual's history or personal story, but it is not the correct current identity, and a “dead name” is not simply interchangeable with the current name.

So, my caution to you is this—be careful with Biblical memes. Not all biblical memes, no matter how well-meaning are accurate. And my encouragement to you is when you meet someone whose name has changed, be appropriate and be loving, simply use the new name as it is the Christian response. Peace, Pastor Jamie