



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH MONMOUTH, IL

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**Gathered by God, We Live Our Faith With:
Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy.**

Our Church—This Week :: November 10, 2025

Our Staff

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Congregation Council

President: Pam Van Kirk

Vice President: Chip Algren

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Pam Best

Brian Elliott

Adam Sanberg

Kurt Volz

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

I have to brag one more time for our Northern Illinois Synod ELCA World Hunger Giving Challenge. We set a goal to raise \$100,000 to receive a match of \$100,000. We set the dates for this match as March 16 to October 16. Not only did we reach the initial goal by early September, we also were able to secure additional matching funds for up to another \$27,000 on top of the first goal. We met that goal also, and are well beyond that, too.

On Sunday, November 2nd, I helped lead a celebration worship to mark the completion of this challenge. We revealed in that service that \$282,822 was raised for World Hunger during these dates. But wait — there's more! Additional money was received by the ELCA national offices, and additional money was sent in after the campaign date, that while not included in our matching campaign still gets counted toward our giving. This means we are well over \$300,000 and still counting. First Lutheran supported this matching campaign sending in a little more than \$2600 back after our collection in March. Another synod pastor, who visited with us earlier this year, told his congregation what we did, and that led to his congregation raising over \$30,000 for this campaign. Did you ever imagine what we did would inspire another congregation? Are you surprised that our few fish and loaves turned into a gathering that netted over \$300,000?

I remain thankful for the gifts of our congregation. I remain overwhelmed by the generosity of our synod. I cannot wait to see what our synod does next in supporting ELCA World Hunger.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM Worship

Bible Study Opportunities

Tuesdays, beginning Oct 7

at 10 AM: BYOB&B

Advent Season Is Coming

Join us for Advent Wednesdays—Dec 3, 10, and 17 — 6 PM Soup Suppers and Advent Wreath Devotions—a congregation activity and a take home family activity.

Sign up in the Narthex to bring a crock-pot of soup. Our Wreath Devotion Theme for this season will be: Watch, Wait, Wonder.

Gathering on Wednesdays in a busy season may seem counter-intuitive ... but maybe you are too busy on weekends to gather for worship; or, maybe you just need an extra moment to catch your breath and to focus on something other than the commercialization of the season.

Plus, Christmas Eve worship is Wednesday, December 24th—so this series will lead us well into that night's celebration. Join us, invite your friends and neighbors and people you know who may be missing a connection to our congregation.

On Going Bible Studies

Tuesdays at 10 AM: BYOB&B

Bring your own Bible and beverage

Thinking Faithfully Out Loud

A Bible study with Faith Presbyterian and First United Methodist Churches, hosted here at First Lutheran

We were set to have our last session of study this week, but there is a bonus session the group has asked for—so next week, November 18th will be the last opportunity to join in this great cross-town church study.

Revised Congregation Constitution

The revised Constitution is now available on our website for review. Or by contacting the church office for a copy to be mailed to you.

Keep in mind these dates: Sunday, December 7th, for a information meeting after worship to discuss the major revisions in this new document

Sunday, January 4th, after worship, we are having a special congregation meeting to vote to approve this new constitution

Sunday, January 25th, we will hold our annual meeting and during the annual meeting vote to ratify our new constitution.



Pictured: Bishop Stacie Fidler, Pastor Jamie Gallagher, Kent Terry, Carol Erickson, Becky Wright, Pastor Josh Ebener, Pastor Dan Rift.

This is the presentation check revealing what our synod raised during the marching campaign. The signatures on the check are from all the people attending the celebration worship service—demonstrating this check is from the whole Northern Illinois Synod.

The ELCA, a Primer

We are a part of the ELCA, partly because of our ancestors and heritage and previous church affiliations all blended together with other ancestors and heritages and previous church affiliations to become the ELCA in 1988. We are ELCA because we have a shared worship life, that means we share patterns of worship in hymnals and agree to a plan on how to hear God's Word through the year. We are ELCA because we are a congregational expression of the church affiliated with a regional expression of the church (the Northern Illinois Synod) and also affiliated with a national expression of the church (the ELCA). We are ELCA because the decisions for how we are church rest in the people of the congregation, as well as the voting delegates at synod and churchwide assemblies.

Because of our day and age, we also like to throw around terms like "Conservative" or "Liberal" to describe churches. But this is not fair, as the membership of our denomination is made of individuals who would use both of those terms to describe their own identity. But we do see some trends through our teachings that overall remind us how we interpret God's Word and how we apply God's calling through the church.

We, for instance, are a very welcoming church. People of all political persuasions are welcome. People of all color are welcome. People of all genders and all gender identities and sexual orientations are welcome.

We do not withhold the sacraments from someone based on any earthly line of division. We welcome all people to serve as leaders and as clergy. We do not restrict God's calling to people based on gender or gender identity or sexual orientation. We find God calling us to serve the least of our siblings in the world. We find partnerships valuable across religious lines.

Does this make the ELCA "Liberal" or "Progressive"? Some might choose those words. But again, this is not really accurate. Labels are often boxes that fall short of understanding the whole church. And we have strong ties to conservative elements like—what the sacraments are, how the Word of God is to be rightly proclaimed, how our church is depended on the members for deciding local, regional, and national church policy and direction.

A label such as our culture would use to define an organization will always fall short in describing the church. But that is the beauty of being the ELCA.

SANKTA LUCIA

AT AUGUSTANA COLLEGE



MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2025 • 7:00 PM

Ascension Chapel • Augustana College
820 38th Street • Rock Island, Illinois

*Join us for a sing-along program of Scandinavian Christmas
carols, special music, and a candlelight Sankta Lucia procession,
led by the Augustana Swedish language students*

Sponsored by Scandinavian Studies, the Swenson Center,
the American Scandinavian Association, and Campus Ministries



Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

The long season of Ordinary Time is nearing completion. Remember, our worship year is divided into three cycles—the Christmas Cycle, the Easter Cycle, and the Ordinary Time Cycle.

Christmas Cycle includes Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

Easter Cycle includes Lent and Easter through Pentecost Day

Ordinary Time Cycle is the rest of the year.

These stories allow us to hear God's incarnation story, God's Salvation story, and God's sanctification story—that is How God came in the flesh; how God saves through Jesus' death and resurrection; and, how God calls us to lives that reflect Jesus.

And while all three of these elements are present throughout the whole year and intertwined, these generalizations give our worship themes that flow with the calendar year and help us to experience God in new and powerful ways every week.

Worship Guild Members

November 16 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Pam Best
Reader:	Steve Erlandson
Com Asst:	Adam Sanberg
Narthex Host:	Carolyn Kellert
Musician:	Janice Algren

November 23 — Christ the King Sunday

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

November 30— Advent 1

Usher:	Steve Erlandson
Reader:	Pam Best
Com Asst:	Dave Sandstrom
Narthex Host:	Carolyn Kellert
Musician:	Janice Algren

December 7— Advent 2

Usher:	David Sandstrom
Reader:	Judy Sanberg
Com Asst:	Trace Gallagher
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren



Advent Sunday School

Join us on Sundays, December 7, 14, and 21 for Sunday School in Advent.

We will begin with a time of song at 9:45 AM in the Lounge. The families will join worship for the lighting of the Advent wreath, then be dismissed for an advent lesson and take-home family faith project.

Families will rejoin the worship service after the sermon and remain in worship for communion and the dismissal.

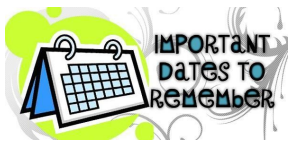
This is for families with children of all ages.

Jamieson Center Food Pantry

We are bringing back our grocery cart for Jamieson Center Food Pantry. Please bring non-perishable food items, personal care hygiene products, or infant care items (diapers, etc) and place in the cart.

A folder will be placed with the cart for direct cash donations for Jamieson Center Food Pantry.

In December, our monthly vision and purpose collection will be for Jamieson Center, but the need is there all year long. All donations for Jamieson Center will be taken weekly to the food pantry.



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, November 9th — Ordinary Time

Tues, Nov 11 10 AM BYOB&B Study

6 PM Council meeting

Sat, Nov 15 12 noon—Pathways/ Council
lunch workshop

Sunday, November 16th — Ordinary Time

Mon, Nov 17th 6:30 PM Pathways meeting

Sunday, November 23rd — Ordinary Time

Sun, Nov 23 11 AM Advent Decorating

Thurs, Nov 27 Happy Thanksgiving

Office Closed Thurs Nov 27 and Fri Nov 28

Sunday, November 30th — Advent 1

Sun, Nov 30 MRHS Madrigals join us for
worship

Mon, Dec 1 9:30 AM Sarah Circle
7 PM Building/Grounds

Wed, Dec 3 6 PM Advent Soup/Devotion

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



Nov 9 Ted Hanson
Nov 14 Theodore Coombes
Nov 15 Troy Hippen
Nov 19 Jan Martin
Nov 20 Lewis Sanberg
Nov 22 Delmar Champion
Nov 23 Jenny Sanberg
Nov 26 Brady Sanberg
Nov 28 Ray Golden
Nov 29 Brenda Jones
Nov 30 Glenna Martin
Dec 1 Evelyn Sprecher
Dec 1 Lewis Sprecher
Dec 2 Linda McGuire
Dec 5 Carol Hanson
Dec 10 Kevin Sprecher
Dec 13 Kathy Erlandson
Dec 13 Ben Sanberg
Dec 16 Michael Pearson
Dec 17 Caleb Sanberg
Dec 17 Jackie Slater
Dec 18 Tyler Osborn
Dec 18 Adam Sanberg
Dec 23 Derek Johnson
Dec 26 Janice Algren
Dec 28 Emma Nuckles
Dec 30 Gary Sanberg



Feb 22 Kenny & Nancy
Reynolds
Mar 1 Phil & Trudy Bergren
Mar 11 Cecil & Kay Lovdahl
Mar 14 Jim & Tammy Slater
Apr 2 Don & Kathy Fillman
Apr 25 Todd & Kris Champion
Apr 28 Ron & Deb Manuel
May 5 Craig & Brenda Jones
May 6 Chuck & Connie
Larimer
May 21 Ted & Sue Hanson
Jun 1 Rodger & Linda Ellison
Jun 4 Gary & Judy Sanberg
Jun 7 Dennis & Becky
Terpening
Jun 8 Ben & Jenny Sanberg
Jun 12 Neal & Jackie
Heerwagen
Jun 13 Michael & Barb Pearson
Jun 14 Doug & Kathi Cruce
Jun 14 Rich & Nancy Hanson
Jun 15 Rob & Tammy Ravel
June 19 Stan & Diane Carlson

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom,
Emily Agema, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Wes Lovdahl,
Doug Moulden, Marlene Moulden, Teresa Eyler

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

Once again this November, we will be supporting our Lutheran Preschool and Day Care. Each Christmas season, the Preschool and Day Care staff select items to purchase as “Christmas gifts” to the center. These are wrapped and joyfully opened by the students of the center.

Our Vision and Purpose Giving will help the staff in getting items for the center.

Thank you for all the ways you support the Preschool and Day Care center here at our church.

January, Strom Center == \$250.00

February, Lutheran Disaster Response == \$515.00

March, ELCA World Hunger == \$2,609.00

April, Special Olympics == \$410.00

May, Recharge Center == \$407.00

June, St. Jude Run (Wendy Anderson) == \$772.00

July, LWR School Kits == \$270.00

August, Kiwanis Club == \$460.00

September, Out of Darkness Walk == \$412.00

October, Mosaic == \$261.00

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



For I know that my redeemer lives and that at the last he will stand upon the earth. Job 19:25

Did you know that the season of Advent, which today is celebrated as 4 Sundays prior to Christmas Day, was once celebrated as a season of 8 Sundays? Yes. Once upon a time, we might be already in the season of Advent today, waiting, watching, for the Messiah. Quite some time ago, the seasons of the lectionary were adjusted, and Advent was shortened to its current 4-week format. But the remnants of that former pattern still hang with us. And part of the ways Advent used to be celebrated was with a focus not so much on the birth of Jesus, but the return of Jesus.

And while we have scripture, from Old and New Testaments, that talk about God having the final say, God reigning over an eternal kingdom, and even scripture that tells us we will see that final and everlasting reign of God, the truth really is we do not need to wait for that someday reality. We are living right here and right now in the Day of the Lord. Our redeemer lives, and through the last, he is standing on the earth. How do we know this? Because Jesus is raised from the dead. And today, Jesus is present on earth through the church. Where the church is doing what Jesus would do, there we are experiencing the full kingdom of God, then we are witnessing our redeemer standing upon the earth.

So, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, free the oppressed, these are just a few examples of doing what Jesus did and this is how we will see our redeemer standing on earth. Welcome the stranger, invite in the neighbor, cross those cultural and societal barriers to demonstrate love — again, these are scripturally attested to ways of living that will for sure mean we will see our redeemer living. Bury the hatchet with that person you have a grudge with, offer forgiveness, remember to be compassionate, extend mercy at all times — the simplicity of what it looks like to be standing upon the earth with our redeemer is quite remarkable.

I know there is a lot of focus on heaven as a after life party, a place where we have been received for right living here and now, a place secure away from the eternal torment of an angry God. But when scripture talks about what happens after our death, it is always in the same light—there is God with a happy party for ALL of God’s creation, no exceptions. And whenever we get caught up in thinking our faith is only about preparing us for that next party, be it through our right beliefs or our right actions, we are reminded time and time again, there is no wait. Live into that God’s eternal reign now. For the Lord, our Redeemer, lives and walks upon the earth today.

Peace, Pastor Jamie