



# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

## MONMOUTH, IL

116 S. B Street, Monmouth, IL 61462; (309)734-2106

www.flcmonmouth.org; email: office@flcmonmouth.org

Follow us on Facebook @FLCMonmouth.org



**Gathered by God, We Live Our Faith With:**

**Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy.**

### Our Church—This Week :: March 30, 2026

#### Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher

prjamie@flcmonmouth.org

Cell (630)200-3550

Musicians: Janice Algren

Carolyn Kellert

Preschool and Day Care Director

Bobbi Nees

(309) 734-5350

#### Congregation Council

President: Pam Van Kirk

Vice President: Chip Algren

Secretary: Pam Best

Adam Sanberg

Kurt Volz

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

Welcome to Holy Week. It does not quite feel like Holy Week when there is a war taking place. It also does not feel like Holy Week as our lives are so busy that when we have a night with nothing scheduled we want to keep it that way, because those nights are so few any more. But our feelings of this week aside, the calendar is clear — this week we celebrate Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Day.

That’s right, amidst the pressures of work deadlines, school kids getting a 5 day weekend, family gatherings, clubs and organizations meeting, pet appointments, and trying to figure out who to root for in whatever is left of our college basketball brackets, we take a moment to be rooted in the central story of our faith.

Faith in Jesus is why we gather here at First Lutheran. Faith in Jesus grounds our life, gives us meaning and purpose, and centers us around what is most important—the love of God in Christ Jesus. To gather for these days is the opportunity to hear again why faith in Jesus matters, because he gave himself to us in the broken bread and wine of his body and blood, because he let the world think it won on the day of the cross, only for the world to be surprised that God’s love never dies and always has the final say on the day of resurrection.

Join us this week on Thursday and Friday at 7 PM in the chapel. Offer praise to God once again this Holy Week for all Jesus did for us. Be refreshed and renewed in faith so you can once again be refreshed and renewed for a world a war, a world full of commitments, a world full of people like you—grounded and secure in the love of God in Christ Jesus.

#### **Sunday Schedule**

**9:30 AM Coffee**

**10:00 AM Worship**

**Sunday School**

**April 12 & 26**

**9:45 AM**

**Future Bible Study  
Opportunities will be  
announced soon**

#### **Easter Celebration**

Join us for Easter Breakfast on Sunday, April 5th at 9 AM in our fellowship hall. There will be donuts and muffins, juice, and our ever present Keurig will be ready to help you to your favorite hot beverage.

We have activities planned for kids. And this is an opportunity to be the extended family of God and share in this time of celebration and help our kids feel just how big our church can be with everyone sharing in the fun.

## Core Values

As our Council and Pathways Team prepares to review the feedback from our congregation feedback forum in February, we are taking a moment to explore the draft core statements. Our fifth core value statement is “We create a safe haven, reflecting the hope of God’s Kingdom.”

When we hear the word “haven”, we think of a safe port, away from the wild and unpredictable seas. Or we think of a sanctuary, where animals are protected from hunters or are able to heal from injuries free from other predators. Or we think of a church, a place where all people are welcome, where bullies are excluded, where those who are wandering can find a place to call home.

This is what we are trying to create here at First Lutheran Church—a haven. A place where people are protected from the wilds of the world, a place where people can find healing for their soul, where people are protected from those who would otherwise prey on them. We create this kind of haven because of the hope we have in God’s Kingdom—a hope that says the world can be different, a hope that says the world will be different through the love of God in Christ Jesus.

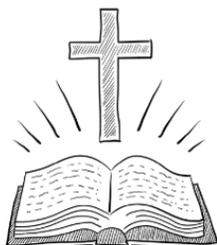
We live this hope as we welcome the refugee, the immigrant, the college student, the random stranger who happens to walk in. We live this hope as we let people offer what gifts they have for simply being who they are. We live this hope as we say, ‘here in this church you are loved unconditionally, without having to be anything other than who you have been created to be.’

And sure, we stumble sometimes. Sure, we sometimes still say the wrong thing to someone, or we look at someone the wrong way and they think we are being judgmental, and we wish we could undo the look or take back the off-hand remark with unintentional consequences. But the hope in Jesus is not in our perfection, but our confession when we mess up, our forgiveness for a new start, and a haven where people learn together how to be community, a beautiful messed up and growing in God’s love community.

## The Easter Story

### Word Search

- |             |              |              |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| ALIVE       | JESUS CHRIST | REDEMPTION   |
| ANGEL       | LAMB         | RESURRECTION |
| APOSTLES    | LAST SUPPER  | RISEN        |
| BELIEVE     | LENT         | SACRIFICE    |
| BETRAYAL    | MARY         | SAVIOR       |
| CHURCH      | MIRACLE      | SIN          |
| CROSS       | NEW TESTAMEN | SON          |
| CROWN       | PENANCE      | STONE        |
| CRUCIFY     | PENTECOST    | SUNDAY       |
| DIED        | PILATE       | THORNS       |
| DISCIPLES   | PRAYER       | TOMB         |
| FAITH       |              |              |
| FORGIVEN    |              |              |
| GOOD FRIDAY |              |              |
| JERUSALEM   |              |              |



# Worship

## LENT

February 18 to April 4



## Holy Week

### Worship Guild Members

#### March 29— Palm Sunday

Usher: Pam Van Kirk  
Reader: Kurt Volz, Judy Sanberg, Maddie  
Blaesing, Trace Gallagher  
Com Asst: Kurt Volz  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

#### April 2 , Maundy Thursday

Usher: Kurt Volz  
Reader: Steve Erlandson  
Com Asst: Diane Carlson  
Musician: Janice Algren

#### Apr 3, Good Friday

Pam Van Kirk  
Carolyn Kellert

#### April 5 — Easter Sunday

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

#### April 12 — Easter Sunday

Usher: Pam Best  
Reader: Judy Sanberg  
Com Asst: Robin Johnson  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Janice Algren



### Recognition for Caring Hearts Ministry

Join us Sunday, April 12th, after worship for a cake reception honoring Betty Bruyn and Glenna Martin for all their years of dedicated service to our church leading the Caring Hearts Ministry.

If you have ever been to a funeral luncheon you know the dedication these women put into serving the families who are grieving. And now it is time to honor them as they step back from leadership roles.

So join us on April 12th for this opportunity to say thank you to the women who have always been there to care for our families in our times of need.

### Strom Center Lent Worship Schedule

Strom Center (211 South A Street) is again hosting breakfast and devotions on the Fridays during Lent. Breakfast begins at 6:30 AM, and the devotion begins at 7:15 AM.

- April 3: Immaculate Conception Church



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



*For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.*

Sunday, March 29th—Palm Sunday

Thurs, Apr 2—7 PM Maundy Thursday Worship

Fri, Apr 3—7 PM Good Friday Worship

Both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday  
 Worship will be in the Chapel

Sunday, April 5th – Easter Sunday

Sun, Apr 5—9 AM Easter Breakfast

Mon, Apr 6— 9:30 AM Sarah Circle

7 PM Building/Grounds Meeting

Sunday, April 12th—Easter 2nd Sunday

Sun, Apr 12 — 9:45 AM Sunday School

11:00 AM reception for Betty and  
 Glenna

Tues, Apr 14—6 PM Council Meeting

Sunday, April 19th — Easter 3rd Sunday

Monday, Apr 20 to Wednesday, Apr 22,

Pastor Jamie will be out of the office

Sunday, April 26th—Easter 4th Sunday

Tue, Apr 28th—6 PM Southwest Conference

Spring Assembly at Trinity Lutheran,  
 Galesburg

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



- Mar 30 Anna Lovdahl
- Apr 4 Marlys Dobry
- Apr 5 Deb Manuel
- Apr 6 April Icenogle
- Apr 7 Fred Burgland
- Apr 10 Trace Gallagher
- Apr 11 Angela Bradley-Volz
- Apr 13 Elise Blaesing
- Apr 16 Nate Gallagher
- Apr 18 Chip Algren
- Apr 20 Diane Carlson
- Apr 20 Warren Dobry
- Apr 20 Rachael Nuckles
- Apr 23 Lindsay Martin
- Apr 23 Rob Ravel
- Apr 25 Deve Erlandson
- Apr 28 Sharon Edwin
- May 6 Andrew Youngquist
- May 7 Jacob Ide
- May 8 Sophie Shrader
- May 16 Shelly Golden
- May 18 Todd Champion
- May 19 Carl Hamberg
- May 22 Lorene Nelson
- May 26 David Sandstrom
- May 27 Charlotte Sanberg



- 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 4 Gary & Judy Sanberg
- Jun 7 Angela & Kathleen Bradley Volz
- 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
- Jun 23 Mike & Susie Jurgens
- Jun 23 John & Pam VanKirk
- Jun 26 Dave & Kathy Erlandson
- Jun 26 Gary & Jan Martin
- Jun 30 Chip & Janice Algren

## Prayer Requests

Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Janet Lowe, Wes Lovdahl, Pat Clark, Jennie Best, Dee Dee Yez, Charlotte Volz, Richard Schlicher, Tim Greene, Eloise Swisher

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



### Vision and Purpose Giving

In April, we will be supporting the local Special Olympics. We will have a guest speaker on April 12th share why the Special Olympics are so important.

Kaylee McLaughlin is an athlete as well as an ambassador for Special Olympics. She has joined us in years past to share the value of Special Olympics, and I hope you all are able to join us again this year to hear her share her story and encourage our support for Special Olympics.

Thank you for all the ways you support all our Vision and Purpose monthly giving causes.

January, Mosaic == \$140

February, Lutheran Disaster Response ==\$252

March, ELCA World Hunger

April, Special Olympics

May, Recharge Center

June, St. Jude Run (Wendy Anderson)

July, LWR School Kits

August, Kiwanis Club

September, Out of Darkness Walk

October, Strom Center

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School

December, Jamieson Center



Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called Messiah?"

All of them said, "Let him be crucified!"— Matthew 27:22

As Matthew recounts the story of Jesus' trial, he pins the whole story around this crucial moment. Pilate, the Roman governor over Judea, offering a prisoner release hoping to get rid of this Jesus problem by letting the people choose for Jesus' release. Instead, they ask for another prisoner, leaving Pilate in a quandary. What to do now with this prisoner? Naturally, Pilate had the ability to choose what to do with him. Pilate could have just tossed Jesus into the cell once occupied by Barabbas, it would have been no skin off his back. But Matthew needs to convey something important—the choice to have Jesus executed was not Pilate's, but it was the choice of the people.

Matthew wants to demonstrate that this moment of cosmic good versus cosmic evil came down to a choice by ordinary people, stirred up by religious leaders, choosing a system based on tradition and control. And God let the people have their choice. Rome let the people have their choice. The people made their choice. They would rather have a system of control through absolute interpretations of the law, through constant sacrificing on an altar, through a contentious, yet very "pax Romana" relationship with an empire than have the freedom that comes through a word of forgiveness, an expression of love, a way of living into God's presence instead of reaching for something always out of reach.

We do not stand with the people of ancient Jerusalem watching as a faux trial takes place before us, outcomes predetermined through post-council meeting parking lot meetings. We do stand in its shadow, though The story is still our story. Are we going to choose a system that continues to oppress people, continues to label people as good or bad, continues to enhance the wealthy, privileges only certain persons that fit an unrealistic ideal? Or are we going to choose forgiveness, newness of life, a sacrificial love? The people of ancient Jerusalem made their choice but God did not let their choice win the day. Love rose on Easter day to demonstrate that God does not lose to our choices. Would we have said "Let him be crucified!" if we were there 2000 years ago—most likely. Do we still say in our own times some version of that same expression? Probably we do. And yet, God's love still rises. God's love still wins the day. God's love is still yearning for us to choose it now and not wait for it only on the last day.

Peace, Pastor Jamie