



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

MONMOUTH, IL

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

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

Our Church—This Week :: October 20, 2025

Our Staff

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Carolyn Kellert

Preschool and Day Care Director

Bobbi Nees

(309) 734-5350

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,

October marches along, and we have very exciting ministry taking place at First Lutheran Church. Our Tuesday BYOB&B study with our Methodist and Presbyterian friends is going fantastic. It is not too late to jump in. Each week is another topic that helps us better understand how we think theologically. The Chosen Watch Party on Wednesdays is another great opportunity to gather and learn more about the life of Jesus and his disciples. We have conversation after each episode that helps us better understand why the Gospel writers tell the story the way they do ... and why the producers of the show made the choices they did for their story telling.

We are also looking forward to this year's Halloween Fun Night. Donations of candy are still needed, so please bring your donations to the office any time before Tuesday, October 28th. This is a great chance to welcome in up to 200 people in that hour of our party and to let them experience the joy of the holiday. Come, wear a costume if you have one, be a part of creating memories for these kids and their families.

There is more ministry around the corner as we change the calendar page from October to November. Like our November 2nd Soup Luncheon hosted by the church council, and the November 2nd Northern Illinois Synod World Hunger Giving Challenge celebration worship and meal. Since we made such a big impact towards that giving challenge, it would be great if we had some members attend the event with me. If you are interested in heading up to Rochelle that afternoon to experience this synod event, please let me know.

And before we know it, Advent comes! But we may just slow down here and enjoy our fall ministry for now.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM Worship

Bible Study Opportunities

Tuesdays, beginning Oct 7

at 10 AM: BYOB&B

Wednesdays, beginning Sept 24,

at 10 AM: The Chosen Watch Party

First Lutheran Church
presents:
HALLOWEEN FUN NIGHT
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28TH
6 PM TO 7 PM
Games, Crafts, Snacks, Photos
and more ...
First Lutheran Church
116 South B Street
Enter from parking lot
Co-Sponsored by Lutheran Day Care and Preschool
Scouting BSA Troop 4705; Cub Pack 3705

Go to our FB page and share our post about our upcoming event

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

Wednesdays at 10 AM: The Chosen Watch Party

Join us as we continue to watch season 5 of the tv series “The Chosen”, a dramatic retelling of the Gospel stories which leads to greater understanding of scripture

NIS World Hunger Celebration

The Northern Illinois Synod has completed a wonderful giving challenge raising from donations and matching donations over a quarter million dollars for ELCA World Hunger since March 16th.

Join the synod on Sunday, November 2nd at 4 PM at Faith Lutheran Church, Rochelle, for a celebration worship and sandwich and cake reception.

Bishop Stacie Fidlar is preaching. Pastor Jamie is a worship leader. RSVP to Pastor Jamie and to coordinate shared rides to Rochelle that day.

First United Methodist Prayer Shawl Ministry

The First United Methodist Church of Monmouth has a prayer shawl ministry and you are invited to join in — no experience necessary.

They create prayer shawls to give to individuals and families who might need to feel God’s love and healing. The group meets on the first and third Sundays of the month from 2 PM to 4 PM in the chapel at First UMC (221 East Broadway). They are willing to teach anyone how to knit or crochet and have plenty of supplies to help you get started. If you have questions, please contact Joy Boostrom at jboostrom62@gmail.com

The ELCA, a Primer

Last week, I had a column here introducing our newly installed presiding bishop, Rev. Yehiel Curry. Bishop Curry was elected this last summer at the Churchwide Assembly. We talk a lot about our connection to this denomination known by its abbreviation—the ELCA, or as it is spelled out, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. But do we really fully understand what this denomination is, why we are connected to it? Let’s take some time and re-familiarize ourselves with our denomination.

First, some history to help explain how we became the ELCA. From the earliest days of colonizers from Europe coming to what we now know as the USA, people of many faiths travelled to these lands, including Lutherans. When Lutherans came from Germany or Sweden, or Norway or Finland, they came here speaking their own languages and having their own national traditions. So naturally, there were a lot of Lutheran church organizations that united churches mostly based on language and cultural traditions.

As the 19th century became the 20th century, there were close to 100 different Lutheran organized church groups, all setting up congregations in communities where their language and culture were represented — like Monmouth, where our Lutheran ancestors were Swedish. But gradually through the 20th century, Lutherans began realizing they couldn’t depend on their home nations to keep sending new pastors or even new immigrants. So, Lutherans began the process of merging and by the 1950’s there were less than 10 major Lutheran organized groups, which by the 60’s had consolidated into 3 major groups — the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). As we entered the 1970’s there was a desire to bring all three Lutheran groups into one. In fighting in the LCMS forced a split in that group, leaving the ALC, the LCA, one part of that LCMS split to come together to form the ELCA in 1988 while the other part of the LCMS split remained separate. Today, we still have many Lutheran organized groups in the US. The ELCA and LCMS are the two largest, but the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Lutheran Churches in Mission for Christ, and the North American Lutheran Church, all still claim hold to the Lutheran name. Now this was highly oversimplified, and over the next few weeks, we will dive more into specifics of what it means to be a part of the ELCA. But for now, just know, we are ELCA partly because of our ancestors language and culture and partly because of decisions about theology.



Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

Worship is at the heart of what it means to be a Christian community. As the heart, it is where we gather for communal prayer, to hear God's declaration of forgiveness, to receive the sacrament of communion, and to hear how God's word encourages us along life's way.

Worship includes songs and prayers and responsive dialogues and creeds and more prayers. Worship includes seeing friends, offering them your greeting of peace, being inspired by the art that adorns the sanctuary walls and ceiling, and maybe even having a ray of sunshine come through the stained glass window at the most opportune moment. Worship involves God's word read from scripture and proclaimed by the preacher and sung about in new and favorite hymns.

Worship involves our heads full of schedules we are trying to keep straight, our hearts full of weights sometimes too heavy to bear alone, our souls bogged down by conflicted feelings about what we want to believe and what God's word is telling us we are supposed to believe. It is truly remarkable what all is involved with worship.

Worship Guild Members

October 26 — Reformation Sunday

Usher:	Pam Van Kirk
Reader:	Doug Cruce
Com Asst:	Diane Carlson
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

November 2 — All Saints Sunday

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

November 9 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Adam Sanberg
Reader:	Trace Gallagher
Com Asst:	Doug Cruce
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

November 16 — Ordinary Time

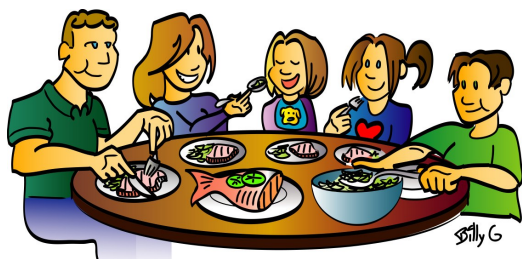
Usher:	Pam Best
Reader:	Steve Erlandson
Com Asst:	Adam Sanberg
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren



All Saints Luncheon

Join us after worship on Sunday, November 2nd for soup luncheon hosted by our congregation council.

This luncheon is for the entire congregation. This is just an opportunity to have lunch together and foster our family dynamic. Invite your family and friends to join us that Sunday to also stay with us for the luncheon.



Mosaic Partners in Possibilities Fundraiser

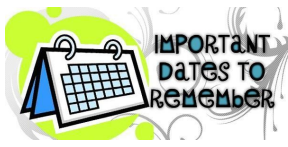
Thursday, October 23, from noon to 1 PM

Park Place Event Center

127 E Carroll Street, Macomb

Mosaic invites you to join them for a one-hour event to discover how you can help Mosaic further its mission of relentlessly pursuing opportunities that empower people. A free lunch is included in this event.

For more information, or to sign up to attend, call or email Melody Robertson by October 10th. (309) 648-7617 or melody.robertson@mosaicinfo.org



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, October 19th—Ordinary Time

Mon, Oct 20 6:30 PM Pathways Team Meeting

Tues, Oct 21 10 AM BYOB&B study

Wed, Oct 22 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Thur, Oct 23-Sat, Oct 25 Pastor in Chicago for
Heerwagen wedding

Sunday, October 26th—Reformation Sunday

Mon, Oct 27 5 PM Halloween Fun Night SetUp

Tues, Oct 28 10 AM BYOB&B study
6 PM Halloween Fun Night

Wed, Oct 29 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sunday, November 2nd—All Saints Sunday

Sun, Nov 2 11 AM All Saints Soup Luncheon
4 PM Synod Hunger Challenge

Celebration Worship

Faith, Rochelle

Mon, Nov 3 7 PM Building/Grounds Meeting

Tues, Nov 4 10 AM BYOB&B Study

Wed, Nov 5 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sunday, November 9th — Ordinary Time

Tues, Nov 11 10 AM BYOB&B Study

6 PM Council meeting

Wed, Nov 12 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

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



Oct 21 Betty Bruyn
Oct 26 Paula Buban
Oct 28 Jackie Heerwagen
Oct 30 Bryan Osborn
Nov 9 Ted Hanson
Nov 14 Theodore Coombes
Nov 15 Troy Hippen
Nov 19 Jan Martin
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



Oct 25 Mark & Ellen Shrader
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, Dan Golden, Teresa Eyler

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

In October, we are supporting Mosaic. Mosaic is a Lutheran rooted ministry helping adults with intellectual disabilities. Their closest office to us is in Macomb. Mosaic assists their clients with life-skills training, independent life opportunities, in-home services, and more.

A big part of their ability to support these adults happens because of donations from individuals and congregations, like ours. See the article on page 2 for more information about a fundraiser they are hosting in October.

Thank you for supporting this months Vision/Purpose.

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,

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



But when he heard this, he became sad; for he was very rich. — Luke 18:23

It is quite a remarkable experience, hearing God's word. Whether proclaimed in the sanctuary, through a televised church service, or standing in the presence of the Son of God himself. Hearing God's word wells up within us a tremendous amount of feelings. Sometimes these feelings are not very comfortable. There was this certain ruler who comes to ask Jesus what it takes to enter God's Kingdom, and after being quizzed by Jesus and having one good answer, Jesus also tells him he lacks one more thing—he has to go and sell everything and give it all to the poor, then he can enter the kingdom of God. This makes this certain ruler very sad, as Luke says, for he was very rich. There are several cases like this across the four Gospels where people come to ask Jesus a question and leave baffled, confused, sad, or mad. Jesus has other religious leaders mad at him. Jesus has curious would be followers turn around and leave him because his word is too hard. Even Jesus' own chosen twelve have serious questions that lead them to betraying or abandoning or doubting Jesus. And even if we go back to the Old Testament, we see many examples of prophets sharing God's Word and not being received well. Elijah had to flee from Jerusalem for his message from God had become too dangerous against the Queen and she wanted to kill him. She didn't succeed against Elijah, but other prophets did not fare so well.

When we hear God's Word, we want it to confirm our own biases, our own desires, our own beliefs. We want it to not challenge us but instead to offer us just the simple forgiveness and encouragement to keep on doing what we have always done. But the funny thing is, the Word of God isn't spoken only to comfort. The Word of God is spoken also to confront and name when systems or beliefs are not aligned with God's Kingdom. A simple message of sell everything, for instance, riles us up, because we have been taught to believe that having things is good, and it is how we survive. But perhaps God's Word has to call out an imbalance of possessions, that some have too much and some do not have at all. And it is not comfortable trying to figure out am I the one with too much, do I have just the right amount, am I supposed to do more to help another? When God's Word leaves us with feelings of anger, sadness, or confusion, we want to be like those who just turn around and walk away. We blame God for being in the wrong, or we blame the messenger, or we just say that's it, I'm out. So, here is today's take away — if ever you hear God's Word and it challenges you, and leaves you feeling very uncomfortable, just know you are not the first, nor are you the last who will experience God's Word leaving you feeling that way. And it all a part of our normal faith journey. God is here to walk with us through those complicated feelings, too. God is willing to let us experience all that comes with hearing his Word. And God is patient with us, as we slowly let God's Word align us bit by bit with God's Kingdom. Peace, Pastor Jamie