



# 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 :: May 11, 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,

Last week ended up being a wild ride for me. After worship ended, I had a phone call from my mother, who asked me to come over to help her see a doctor that afternoon. This led to a brief ER visit, but an eventual doctor appointment on Thursday, and almost as fast yet another trip to the ER. And for me it was a drive to the suburbs of Chicago and a return trip home; on Wednesday, I went to pick up Nate from college, and then drove again to the suburbs. And now I am back home. But even as I type this out on Friday afternoon, there is uncertainty about what may happen in the next few days for my mom's health care. This is a non-life-threatening condition, but one which requires someone to be with her. My sister was also in town this week, but she will have to return home soon as well. It is just a crazy time. And again, my mother will be getting better very soon, and I will leave it there for now. I just share to say this is how my week went and how my next week is all uncertain at this moment.

Which is also to lead into a reminder that if you are wanting to come to the church at a time you will know I can be there, it is always best to call or text me first. There are many days I am at the office, doing office hours, and nothing interferes with my day. There are some days I have meetings or visits that take me out of the office. There are times I have my own appointments or times I am chasing either a kid, or now a parent, for various reasons. If you call or text to ask if I am in, and I am not, I will work with you to find the best time to meet up and help you with what you need. And if I am available, I will be happy to help at that moment. My cell phone is under my name in that column on the left. Here's to hoping this week ends up calmer than last week did.

### **Sunday Schedule**

**9:30 AM Coffee**

**10:00 AM Worship**

### **Sunday School**

**May 10 & 24**

**9:45 AM**

**Wednesday Bible Study returns  
in May**

### **A Season of Creation—Worship Themes and Bible Study**

Throughout May, we will enter a season of creation. In worship, we will use resources developed by the Northern Illinois Synod Creation Cares Committee. These resources include liturgy elements written for worship, and selected readings themed around "Forest Sunday", "Land/Prairie Sunday", "Wilderness Sunday", and "River/Stream Sunday."

Along with our worship themes, we will also have a weekly Bible study on Wednesday mornings at 10 AM in the pastor's study that will explore the scriptures view on God as Creator. We will talk about our tenet of God is Creator; we will talk about our calling by God to be co-creators in this world; we will explore ways that creation has always cried out in pain from human sin, not just in our modern era; and finally we will talk about the restoration of creation that is promised by God and that we can bring about today.

## **Adult Leaders needed for our Scouting Program**

The Scout Troop and Pack that our church charters is looking for a new “charter organization representative.” This person helps connect the troop and pack to the church, represents the church when leaders are being approved, and can attend troop activities as he or she chooses. A charter organization representative must register as an adult leader with the unit and participate in youth protection training as required by Scouting America. If you are interested in assisting the troop, please contact Pastor Jamie

Additional adult leaders are needed for serving the committee as treasurer and committee chairman. We have a couple parents who have held these roles for years and are planning to step back in the coming months. Any adult leader must register with the unit and participate in youth protection training as required by Scouting America.

For more information on how you can help our troop and pack, contact Pastor Jamie.

## **Updated Security System for Day Care/ Office Entrance coming soon**

If you come to the church during the week, you know we have a camera/buzzer system for letting visitors in. This comes with a key card as well. Over the last few months our current system has not been working properly and we have been evaluating new options. In the coming weeks a new system will be installed. If you have a current key card, we will be able to transfer that key card to work with the new system. More information will come about installation dates soon.

## **Strawberry Festival**

Our annual Strawberry Festival is coming on Thursday, June 11th. Please mark your calendars to join us that evening. The Monmouth Municipal Band will perform in our sanctuary at 6 PM.

## **Vision and Purpose**

Do you have a connection with the Teen Recharge Center here in Monmouth? Are you passionate about the Lutheran World Relief kits (school and health)? Talk with Pam Van Kirk or Pastor Jamie about how your vested connection can help bring greater awareness to those causes as we support them with our vision and purpose giving in upcoming months.

## **Summer Bible Reading Challenge**

During the months of June, July, and August, we will embark on a reading challenge. Over the course of 14 weeks, we will read through the entire Gospel of Matthew. Our current lectionary cycle centers on Matthew, so this summer we will get to read all of Matthew, not just the parts that are read aloud during worship.

Each week will have readings from two chapters of Matthew. The series will feature an introduction/overview of the week; a deep dive into each of the two chapters; a video to read along with Pastor Jamie; and a devotional recap. That is 5 different ways to engage the readings throughout the week.

The reading challenge will be posted on our website and our Facebook page. As you join in through the summer, you are encouraged to share with friends, comment on the Facebook posts throughout each week to share your encounter with God’s Word, and discover what the Gospel of Matthew offers for you today.

## **Vacation Bible School**

This year VBS will be held from Sunday August 2nd to Thursday, August 6. The times are from 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM. First United Methodist Church is hosting. Volunteers are needed, and when we know what supplies they need, we will share that list. If you are interested in helping with VBS at the Methodist Church, please let Pastor Jamie know.

# Worship

## Easter

April 5 to May 24

A Season of Creation is an opportunity for our worship to remind us that we are not alone in praising God, in lamenting our suffering to God, in a need of salvation and restoration from God. A Season of Creation directs our awareness at the forests, the prairieland, the wilderness spaces, and rivers and streams. These spaces, which we inhabit, which we exploit, which we recreate in, which we harvest from, which we retreat to, these spaces are created spaces with love from God. These spaces are harmed by the very sin that we confess to God; and these spaces are redeemed and renewed by the same savior who redeems and renews us.

Perhaps this is one reason that placing the season of creation into the Easter season this year fits so perfectly. We are celebrating the resurrection, we are celebrating what it means for us, and now we are celebrating what it means for all creation around us.

### Are You Interested in Serving in Worship?

At this time, our list of worship helpers includes:

11 lectors; 12 communion assistants, 12 ushers

Which means a person volunteering helps out about 1 time every 12 weeks or so. Though, some of the folks on this list are on two or even three of these lists. So, often a person is helping in worship more like 2 or 3 times every 12 weeks.

Perhaps you have an interest and would like to help as an usher, or assisting in communion, or reading the scripture passages and prayers of intercession?

Let Pastor Jamie know you are interested in helping out in worship and get your name added into the rotating list of those who help bring our worship services to life.

### Worship Guild Members

#### May 17 — Easter Sunday 7

Usher: Doug Cruce  
Reader: Julie Blaesing  
Com Asst: Chip Algren  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Janice Algren

#### May 24 — Pentecost Sunday

Usher: Ray Golden  
Reader: Doug Cruce  
Com Asst: Mark Shrader  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Janice Algren

#### May 31 — Trinity Sunday

Usher: Diane Carlson  
Reader: Julie Blaesing  
Com Asst: Gary Sanberg  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

#### June 7 — Trinity Sunday

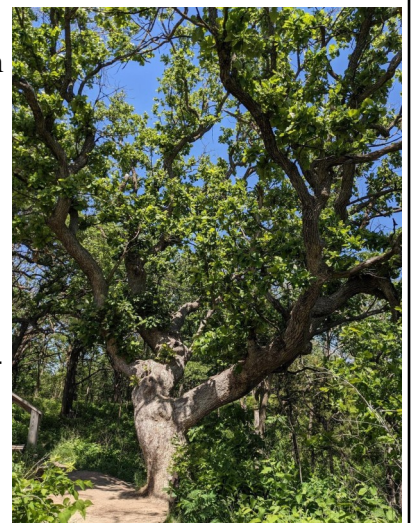
Usher: Pam Van Kirk  
Reader: Trace Gallagher  
Com Asst: Julie Blaesing  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

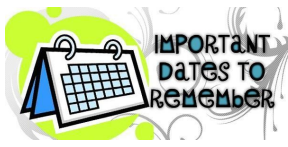


This is the oldest tree in the state of Nebraska. An oak tree that was a sapling in the year 1644.

Imagine the history this tree has witness. Near the Missouri River in Ponca State Park, this tree has witnessed indigenous tribes, the exploration of Lewis and Clark, the westward expansion of the United States. As

you reflect on Forest Sunday themes from worship, what does this tree represent for you?





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



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

Sunday, May 10th –Easter 6th Sunday

Sun, May 10 Happy Mother’s Day

9:45 AM Sunday School

Wed, May 13—10 AM Bible Study

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Sunday, May 17th — Easter 7th Sunday

Tue, May 19th—6 PM rescheduled Council meeting

Wed, May 20th—10 AM Bible Study

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Sunday, May 24th—Pentecost Sunday

Mon, May 25—Memorial Day, Office Closed

Wed, May 27 — 10 AM Bible Study

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Sunday, May 31st—Trinity Sunday

Mon, Jun 1—7 PM Building/Grounds Committee

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Sunday, June 7th – Season after Pentecost

Tues, Jun 9—6 PM Council Meeting

Thurs, Jun 11—5—7 PM Strawberry Festival  
 6 PM Municipal Band Performs

Fri, Jun 12 to Sat, Jun 13—Synod Assembly

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



- May 16 Shelly Golden
- May 18 Todd Champion
- May 19 Carl Hamberg
- May 22 Lorene Nelson
- May 26 David Sandstrom
- May 27 Charlotte Sanberg
- May 28 Lena Johnson
- May 28 Nancy Reynolds
- May 29 Kaylee Teel
- May 31 Tammy Slater
- Jun 2 Alexia Golden
- Jun 2 Jarrod Hippens
- Jun 2 Susie Jurgens
- Jun 6 Rose Youngquist
- Jun 11 Wendy Anderson
- Jun 21 Aaron Jensen
- Jun 22 Denise Mann
- Jun 30 Collin Nuckles
- Jul 3 Trudy Bergren
- Jul 3 Hal Tate
- Jul 4 Jennifer Sprecher
- Jul 9 Cohen Anderson
- Jul 9 Kris Champion
- Jul 13 Reese Anderson
- Jul 15 Pastor Jamie
- Jul 17 Cecil Lovdahl
- Jul 19 Mark Shrader



- 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
- Jun 30 Warren & Marlyn Dobry
- Jul 2 Jeremy & Wendy Anderson
- Jul 8 Tom & Pam Best
- Jul 12 Steve & Karen Erlandson

## Prayer Requests

Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Janet Lowe, Pat Clark, Jennie Best, Dee Dee Yez, Charlotte Volz, Richard Schlicher, Eloise Swisher, Cecil Lovdahl, Sue Gallagher

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



### Vision and Purpose Giving

In May, we are supporting the Teen Recharge Center here in Monmouth.

**At Recharge, we are committed to helping teens discover their individual strengths & passions, while creating a safe, judgment free environment for them to acquire skills, resources & opportunities within their community.**

Thank you for all the ways you support our Vision and Purpose Giving throughout the year.

January, Mosaic == \$140

February, Lutheran Disaster Response ==\$252

March, ELCA World Hunger == \$900.00

April, Special Olympics == \$550

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



And the Lord said, “What have you done? Listen, your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground! — Genesis 4:10

The earliest stories in the book of Genesis are stories at our ancestors of faith wrote to explain why the world was the way they were experiencing it. The story in Genesis 4 about the brothers Abel and Cain offering to God, and Cain being angry for God not accepting his offering, and killing his brother Abel, was written as a way to explain why the different nations were always at war with each other. Nation fighting against nation is not new in our own time, we just have different weapons. We do not need to physically strike with our own hand, we can instead send bombs from jets or ships at sea. This story in Genesis 4 has The LORD asking Cain why he has murdered Abel, and noting that Abel’s blood is crying out from the ground. The theological implication is that when we sin against each other, the land beneath us is harmed by our sin.

When we hear of war taking place we need to ask how is the ground, the land beneath us crying out. Right now war is raging in the middle east, and we definitely pray that our soldiers and sailors and air force personnel are safe and protected. But there bombs are flying. Innocent children have been killed in their schools. Threats against infrastructure like bridges, utilities and refineries have been made.

The land is crying out against us with the blood of those killed in this war. The land is telling us, as it did to Cain, that what is happening is a sin against one another and a sin against God. There is no just war theory that can rationalize away what is happening right now. There is no amount of bombs that will rectify what diplomacy couldn’t have accomplished first. And the ground, the land beneath our feet suffers and cries out to us. Meanwhile, in our own backyards, our fields are being planted, we are preparing our soil, our land, for another harvest that will turn into food products and energy resources and so much more. Our ground cries out to say it is unjust that we go on as if nothing bothers us, while our sisters and brothers in other lands are having their blood soak into their soil. Yes, our ancestors in faith acknowledged nation will rise up against nation—but yes, this is sin and God does not approve. And yes, we are called to live differently. Humanity can repent and turn away from this sin of war, of striking one another down. Will the story of Cain and Abel be the omen for change or the prescription of a closed-hearted humanity?

Peace, Pastor Jamie