



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 :: August 3, 2026

Our Staff

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President: Pam Van Kirk

Vice President: Chip Algren

Secretary: Pam Best

Adam Sanberg

Kurt Volz

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

It is good to be home from vacation, and returning to some semblance of normalcy. Over July, I was in Wisconsin with the scout troop for a 50 mile hike, and then with my wife, Katie, we experienced magnificent sites like Scott's Bluff and Chimney Rock in Nebraska, and Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks in Wyoming, and the Battle of Little Big Horn historic site in Montana and Devils Tower again in Wyoming. I will cherish these sites that we visited forever.

Besides all the natural wonders we saw, Katie and I also experienced seeing several wild animals including: bison, grizzly bear, moose, mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, marmots, mountain goats, and prairie dogs, as well as several species of birds. One night from our tent we even heard wolves howling nearby, but they didn't come through our campground.

So many memories there. I hope you have been creating your own amazing memories this summer with places you have gotten to or family you have been able to visit with.

As we turn the page into August, we find ourselves gearing up for the fall already.

This month will feature VBS at the Methodist Church, a back to school prayer night, hosted by our friends at the Methodist Church, the Monmouth College Walk-Out, the return of students for MRHS parking in our lot, and of course the Prime Beef Festival is approaching (Sept 3 is our drive-thru event). I will share more information on each of these events on the next page.

And of course, we also have our outdoor worship. This year we are hosting our outdoor worship at Pattee Park at the corner of Broadway and 11th Street. See more information below.

It does feel weird that as summer continues we are already setting up for school to resume and fall to bring all that the fall does bring, but here we are. Let's dive into all the fun that this month and next season have to offer.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM

Worship

Sunday School

July 12 & 26

9:45 AM

Outdoor worship

Sunday, August 9, 10 AM

Pattee Park (corner of Broadway and 11th)

Bring a chair, bring a baked good to share after worship

Summer Bible Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge is still before us ... We continue through the Gospel of Matthew. So far the first 9 weeks of resources are posted on our website, complete with a video of Pastor Jamie reading that week's 2 chapters. Later this week resources for week 10 will be posted, we are up to chapters 19 and 20. There are 4 more weeks after this week. Keep checking our website and our Facebook page for more information.

Prime Beef Drive Thru

Join us for our Prime Beef Drive Thru on Thursday, September 3rd.

Final details about when we are serving and menu are being worked out with a meeting this week.

But watch for more information to be shared in our next newsletter.

Vacation Bible School

VBS is here. This week through Thursday night, from 5 PM to 8 PM at the Methodist Church. VBS opens with a dinner at 5 PM, songs and welcome at 5:30, groups traveling through their stations until 7:30 and a closing in the sanctuary. The theme is Rainforest Falls, and throughout the week the youth will learn about the love of God through various animals in puppet time and story time and also through games, snacks, songs, and crafts. If you have a youth under 6th grade who hasn't signed up yet, it is not too late.

Scout Troop 4705 Court of Honor

Join Scout Troop 4705 as they celebrate our spring and summer accomplishments.

Sunday, August 9th at 6 PM here in the Fellowship hall. A dessert table will be provided with the court of honor.

Scouts will be recognized for earning merit badges at summer camp and spring merit badge events. One scout earned the mile swim award and four scouts earned their 50 miler hiking award. This is an exciting opportunity to celebrate with our scouts their achievements.

Back to School Prayer at the Square and Blessing of the Backpacks

Join the community on August 17th at 7 PM on the square for a time of prayer, encouragement, and blessing as we start the new year.

Students who bring their backpacks can receive a blessing of their backpack as they prepare for school.

All are welcome. Come and share this time with the whole community - parents, students, teachers, everyone!

Welcome MRHS Students back to school

Help us welcome back MRHS students as they begin another school year. Join Pastor Jamie on the mornings of Wednesday, August 19, Thursday, August 20, and Friday, August 21st from 7:45 AM to 8:15 AM. We will meet in the parking lot and offer students a bottle of water and donut as they head into class.

This is also an opportunity to remind returning students and to share with new students which parking spaces they can use and which spaces they cannot use during the school day.

And it builds community as we visit with students and greet them and get to know them and let them know they have a safe space here.

Monmouth College Walk-Out Monday, August 24th

We welcome the new students to Monmouth College on Monday, August 24th.

Meet at 1 PM in Pastor Jamie's office as we prepare treat bags for about 200 students.

Just before 3 PM we will set up at the corner of 1st Street and Broadway and at 3 PM we will greet the students.

We should be finished by 3:45 PM



The Season After Pentecost May 31 to November 22

Summer worship welcomes us between side trips, long vacations, home projects, gardening, weeding, swatting mosquitoes, campfires, open windows car rides, comfy days in the AC, dodging storms and tornadoes, cleaning up from storms and tornadoes, and just everything else that makes summer life just a different pace than the rest of the year.

Summer worship is classic hymns, new hymns, familiar verses, verses that pique our curiosity, verses that challenge, verses that comfort, prayers that soothe, prayers that name hard realities, prayers that name loved ones, prayers that God hears even when we are too scared to say them aloud, and just about everything else that fills our mind-clearing, soul-renewing, God's-presence-feeling, time together.

This is worship every Sunday, sure. But it is summer. And God who is worshiped at the cradle and on the cross is God worshiped as the fields grow, the flowers bloom, the heat sears, and the winds threaten. Join us this summer, and experience all that worship is.

Worship Guild Members

August 9 -- Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: Doug Cruce
Reader: Julie Blaesing
Communion: Chip Algren
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

August 16 -- Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: Ray Golden
Reader: Doug Cruce
Communion: Trace Gallagher
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

August 23 -- Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: Diane Carlson
Reader: Trace Gallagher
Communion: David Sandstrom
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

August 30 -- Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: Pam Van Kirk
Reader: Steve Erlandson
Communion: Mark Shrader
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Jannice Algren

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.

Summer Newsletter schedule

We will not have weekly newsletters through the summer. Please take note of this schedule and watch for our newsletter publications accordingly:

August 17, August 31

If additional information or updates need to be shared between newsletters, an email and FB social media post will share that.



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



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.



Sunday, August 2nd - Season after Pentecost
Sun, Aug 3 to Thurs, Aug 6 - 5 PM to 8 PM
VBS at First United Methodists Church
Mon, Aug 3 - 7 PM Building and Grounds Committee

Sunday, August 9th - Season after Pentecost
Sun, Aug 9th - Outdoor Worship at Pattee Park
(East Broadway and 11th Street)
Tue, Aug 11th -- 6 PM Council Meeting

Sunday, August 16th -- Season after Pentecost
Wed, Aug 19/Thurs Aug 20/Fri Aug 21
7:45 AM - MRHS Welcome Water passing out

Sat, Aug 22 -- 10 AM Donna Hauge Burial service - for the family
11 AM Celebration of Life in Fellowship hall - for the community

Sunday, August 23rd - Season after Pentecost
Mon, Aug 24 - 3 PM Monmouth College Walk-Out

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



Aug 2 Karen Erlandson
Aug 13 Brandon Reynolds
Aug 16 Eloise Swisher
Aug 23 Kenny Reynolds
Aug 24 Pam Best
Aug 25 Robin Johnson
Aug 25 Tammy Ravel
Aug 27 Kathy Fillman
Sep 1 Ila Roseberry
Sept 4 Chris Algren
Sep 12 Tiny Fillman
Sep 23 Dennis Mann
Sep 24 Manohie Alcin
Sep 25 Lacey Elliott
Sep 28 Maddie Blaesing
Oct 7 Margaret Hackspacher
Oct 10 John Van Kirk
Oct 11 Julie Blaesing
Oct 16 Ayla Johnston
Oct 18 Loretta Reynolds
Oct 21 Betty Bruyn
Oct 26 Paula Buban
Oct 28 Jackie Heerwagen
Nov 9 Ted Hanson
Nov 19 Jan Martin
Nov 23 Jenny Sanberg
Nov 26 Brady Sanberg
Nov 28 Ray Golden
Nov 29 Brenda Jones
Nov 30 Glenna Martin
Nov 30 Judy Sanberg
Dec 2 Linda McGuire
Dec 13 Kathy Erlandson

Feb 22 Kenny & Nancy Reynolds
Mar 11 Cecil & Kay Lovedahl
Mar 14 Jim & Tammy Slater
Apr 2 Don & Kathy Fillman
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
Jun 19 Stan & Diane Carlson
Jun 23 Mike & Susie Jurgens
Jun 23 John & Pam Van Kirk
Jun 26 Dave & Kathy Erlandson
Jun 26 Gary & Jan Martin
Jun 30 Chip & Janice Algren
Jun 30 Warren & Marlys Dobry
Jul 2 Jeremy & Wendy Anderson
Jul 8 Tom & Pam Best
Jul 12 Steve & Karen Erlandson
Jul 24 Michael & Julie Blaesing
Aug 4 Ray & Shelly Golden
Aug 28 Hal & Kathy Tate
Sept 2 Dennis & Denise Mann
Oct 11 Jamie & Katie Gallagher
Oct 15 Ken & Theresa Miller
Oct 25 Mark & Ellen Shrader

Prayer Requests

Ila Roseberry, Janet Lowe, Pat Clark, Dee Dee Yez, Charlotte Volz, Richard Schlicher, Cecil Lovdahl, Donna Winbigler

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

Throughout August, we are supporting the Monmouth Kiwanis Club. This is a service organization with the goal of helping children in our community. Each year, one of their big projects is getting shoes and boots for children who need them. Tom Best shared a great story of how the Kiwanis Club helps these children in his message with us on Sunday morning.

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

Jan, Mosaic == \$140

Feb, Lutheran Disaster Response == \$252

Mar, ELCA World Hunger == \$900

Apr, Special Olympics == \$550

May, Recharge Center == \$380

June, St. Jude Run (Wendy Anderson) == \$625

July, LWR school and health kits == \$372

Aug, Kiwanis Club

Sept, Out of the Darkness Walk

Oct, Strom Center

Nov, Lutheran Day Care & Preschool

Dec, Jamieson Center



Jesus said to [the disciples], "They need not go away; you give them something to eat."

Matthew 14:16

Grieving the loss of his friend and fellow prophet John, Jesus attempts to get away by himself. Only Jesus' plan backfires when the crowds find him and seek what only Jesus can provide - healing. As the day gets late, the disciples attempt to send the crowds away so they can eat, only their plan backfires and Jesus seeks the disciples to provide what they can - the food necessary to feed the crowd. To the dismay of the disciples, they only have 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. To the delight of Jesus, this was more than enough, and it was blessed and broken and in a miracle otherwise not described, a crowd the size of the city population of Monmouth was fed.

We are often overwhelmed with the demands on our life, the grieving when we suffer loss, the stress of overtime when the boss calls, the weather conditions constantly challenging our planting or harvesting schedule, the fiscal responsibilities of family, children, grandchildren. We want to get away and seek normalcy, and yet our plan often backfires as something else goes wrong, breaks unexpectedly, hits the pocketbook when we didn't need our pocketbook taking another hit, and so on. And as our circumstances build up on us, the demands of the world around us continue. People are hungry, programs need support, the food pantry is running low, the government is cutting another program creating more people in need. We just want to send them all away - and yet, here is Jesus with clear instructions - You feed them.

How are we supposed to feed them all when we are barely keeping ourselves afloat? That is the natural question. But then again, Jesus didn't qualify his directive with a baseline that we need to be above before we follow it. Jesus just gave the directive - you, yes you, you who follow me, you feed them. And when we don't know how we can do it, we simply say, well Jesus, this is all I've got.

And if 5 loaves and 2 fish can feed what was well over 10,000 people in that crowd that day ... then the little we bring forward can be brought forward and accomplish untold miracles, too. Following Jesus doesn't require us to be above any particular line of financial stability, it doesn't not require us to have any sort of baseline emotional stability, it doesn't get qualified by the haves or have-nots. It simply starts with us bringing whatever we have, be it just a couple loaves of bread or a whole bank of resources - whatever we have, we bring it, Jesus blesses it, and people are fed.

Peace, Pastor Jamie