



# 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

# February

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

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

## Our Church—This Week :: February 23, 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,

It is Black History Month and it is right we pause and remember someone of great importance in the civil rights movement. Rev. Jesse Jackson died this past week after a long life serving our nation as an activist and public figure. Rev. Jackson was born in Greenville, South Carolina, and grew up in a time when Jim Crow laws of segregation dominated our national culture. After graduating high school, he briefly attended the University of Illinois on a football scholarship, though he would transfer to North Carolina A&T, a historically black university. It was there that his life as an activist began, as he became active in protests against segregated libraries, theaters, and restaurants. He graduated with a degree in sociology and then attended the Chicago Theological Seminary. In 1966, he left school to focus full time on the civil right's movement, eventually being ordained in 1968, and officially receiving his Master's of Divinity in 2000.

Rev. Jackson participated in the Selma to Montgomery marches, became a leader in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and became a key leader in the civil rights movement in Chicago, eventually founding Operation PUSH (People United to Serve Humanity), and even later the Rainbow Coalition.

There is naturally more one could and should write about Rev. Jackson, from his presidential run in 1984 to his media commentator role at CNN and more. More can even be said about his clashes with other civil rights leaders. But it is enough at this moment to simply pause and give thanks for his life. His contributions to the civil rights movement in our nation deserve to be remembered more. Throughout this month, we should desire to learn more about the men and women who have fought for civil rights, the lessons from their lives serve as a reminder for why we continue to pursue a nation built on diversity, equality, and inclusion today.

### **Sunday Schedule**

**9:30 AM Coffee**

**10:00 AM Worship**

**Sunday School**

**March 8 and 22**

**9:45 AM**

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

### **Lent Re-Center Devotions**

Join us throughout Lent on Wednesday Evenings at 7 PM. We will gather in our Chapel for a devotional time to Re-Center ourselves in our faith.

The world around us is crazy, we are tired of arguing over politics, we are anxious for sensibility to return to government at many levels, and we are overwhelmed by many stressors.

Lent provides an opportunity to re-center ourselves in the faith we have in Jesus. Using reflections by Martin Luther, we will reflect on a few themes that will help us remember why our faith is so important and how our faith grounds us even in the crazy, topsy-turvy world.



## Epiphany

### January 6 to February 15

When you come to worship, you will notice a set of banners on the two sides of the front of the sanctuary. And you will see a series of cloths, called paraments, that adorn the altar, lectern, and pulpit. These will all match in color scheme and may even have similar symbols on them.

Let's break down the colors: the color red makes an appearance on a select few Sundays throughout the year: Pentecost Sunday and Reformation Sunday are the two primary days this color appears. Red is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit claims us as God's people and makes us the Church

Occasionally, we might celebrate a minor feast day in memory of a saint, someone honored by the Church. And while we may not use those appointed days often in our worship planning, you might attend another church some day that does. So, if you see Red banners and Red Paraments, and it is not Pentecost Sunday or Reformation Sunday, you will have an opportunity to learn that day about a saint honored from church history.

### Worship Guild Members

#### February 22— 1st Sunday in Lent

Usher: Chip Algren  
Reader: Maddie Blaesing  
Com Asst: David Sandstrom  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Janice Algren

#### March 1— 2nd Sunday in Lent

Usher: Dee Dee Yez  
Reader: Kurt Volz  
Com Asst: Chip Algren  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Janice Algren

#### March 8— 3rd Sunday in Lent

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

#### March 15— 4th Sunday in Lent

Usher: Ray Golden  
Reader: Doug Cruce  
Com Asst: Julie Blaesing  
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire  
Musician: Carolyn Kellert



#### Holy Week Schedule

Mark Your Calendars now to celebrate with your church family these important church holidays:

Palm Sunday, March 29, 10 AM Worship

Maundy Thursday, April 1, 7 PM worship in the chapel

Good Friday, April 2nd, 7 PM worship in the chapel

Easter Sunday, April 5th , 9 AM continental breakfast  
10 AM Worship

#### 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.

- February 27: First Lutheran Church
- March 6: Faith United Presbyterian Church
- March 13: Fairview Center Church
- March 20: High Point Church
- March 27: Heritage Bible Church
- 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, February 22nd—1st Sunday in Lent  
 Sun, Feb 22—11:00 AM, Congregation Core Values and Vision Forum

Wed, Feb 25—7:00 PM Lent Devotion—Chapel  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Sunday, March 1st—2nd Sunday in Lent

Mon, Mar 2—7:00 PM Building/Grounds

Wed, Mar 4—7:00 PM Lent Devotion—Chapel

Sat, Mar 7—MRHS uses sanctuary for Solo/Ensemble contest  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Sunday, March 8th—3rd Sunday in Lent

Tue, Mar 10—6 PM, Council Meeting

Wed, Mar 11—7 PM Lent Devotion—Chapel  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Sunday, March 15th—4th Sunday in Lent

Man, Mar 16, 6:30 PM Pathways Zoom meeting

Wed Mar 18—7 PM Lent Devotion—Chapel

From February 2nd through March 6th, MRHS music department students will be using our facility during school days for solo/ensemble practice. Please check with the church office before using church space during the weekdays during this period.

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



- Feb 26 Teresa Miller
- Feb 27 Heidi Niemann
- Feb 28 Connie Larimer
- Mar 2 Dana Jensen
- Mar 7 Dawn Johnson
- Mar 7 Pam Van Kirk
- Mar 9 Helen Babcock
- Mar 13 Joey Slater
- Mar 20 Dee Dee Yez
- Mar 25 Heather Ide
- Mar 27 Phil Bergren
- Mar 27 Kurt Volz
- 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



- 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 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

## Prayer Requests

Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Janet Lowe, Wes Lovdahl, Pat Clark, Jennie Best, Dee Dee Yez, Charlotte Volz, Richard Schlicher, the family and friends of Cheri Stanton

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



## Vision and Purpose Giving

In February, our Vision and Purpose Giving will support Lutheran Disaster Response.

Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

January, Mosaic == \$140

February, Lutheran Disaster Response

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



The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God," — Matthew 4:3a

The season of Lent gives us an opportunity to reflect on what sin is. Sin is a state of not being in right relationship with God, with our neighbor, with creation, with our very selves. Sometimes sin looks like breaking a commandment of God. Sometimes sin looks like neglecting to do good for someone who is needing help. Sometimes sin looks like temptation to go for something we know we shouldn't have. There are so many ways sin can look. But when we talk about sin, we can easily be tempted to think of sin in a kind of system of categories — there are really bad sins, and there are sins that really minor. And when we think this way, we can easily think that those who commit the really bad sins are the ones all this sin and forgiveness talk is about. This is a form of self-justifying, saying "since I didn't commit murder," for instance, therefore I don't need to be forgiven. This is the tempter coming to us and saying, as the tempter said to Jesus, "If you are a believer ... you don't need forgiveness." But this is one way the tempter lies to us. There is no hierarchy to sin. We all need forgiveness. We may not have committed a really bad sin, but we still have ways we are not in right relationship with our neighbor. Voting for politicians who cut financial supports, end health care access, cut off access for legal immigrants and refugees, is one way we quietly sin and it may not seem lie the same as wielding a knife or a gun at someone, hut this is why sin has no hierarchy, and why having broken relationships with others takes many forms. So, despite the tempter's best try, we do need forgiveness.

Sometimes, the tempter comes to us and says, "If you are a believer, you do things right and that person who doesn't follow your strict moral code is the sinner." This is when we are tempted to weaponize sin against others and all it does is keep the burden of sin on them, and worse yet, it keeps the burden of sin on ourselves. The notion of sin is not one to be weaponized against others, excluding them from God's grace while we take comfort in that same grace.

Sometimes the tempter comes and says to us, "You are not really a believer, for I know the ways you live, and you are not worthy." And this is one of the worst lies the tempter can tell us, that we are not worthy. God has washed away our sin—from our really big sins, to our minor sins, to our breaking relationships with our neighbors, to our pointing our fingers at others to the point where they believe us and don't want to be part of our community. The season of Lent is our chance to tell the tempter his lies have no effect on us. We know we are sinners, so does God, but God loves us anyway, and sends us to love others just as we have been first loved. Peace, Pastor Jamie