



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 :: October 13, 2025

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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,

I hope you have had a good weekend. As I write this, I am preparing for a weekend campout for adult Scout leader training called “Wood Badge”, a program designed to help adult leaders in scouting enhance their scouting skills. I am sure there will be a lot I will get to share with our scout units here when I am done with this two week-end experience.

For sports fans, there is no better time than when football, baseball, hockey, and basketball all collide. This weekend intense playoff games have given many fans plenty of deep emotional rides. I only hope that as we are reading this newsletter next week the Chicago Cubs are still playing more playoff games.

For church, there is a lot to be getting excited about as well. We had a great first session of the new BYOB&B study and there are 5 more weeks to join in. If you missed a session, that is okay, join in any time. And the Chosen tv series continues to serve up wonderful conversations about scripture and how the early church formed.

Fall fields continue to be harvested, and “the horizon continues to come back”, this is a family expression that dates back to when a young Heide saw a field being combined and saw much further into the distance now that the corn was gone.

Through all that holds our attention and distracts us, God continues to be fully presence, calling us to pay attention to the injustices happening around us. On page 3 of this week’s newsletter, I share a letter written and signed by many bishops of our denomination calling attention to the injustices taking place in society today. Please read this letter carefully, and if you want to have further conversation about it, you can contact me any time.

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

WELCA Southwest Conference Fall Gathering

Saturday, October 18th, the WELCA Groups of the churches of the Southwest Conference will gather here at First Lutheran Church at 8:30 AM for breakfast and registration, and 9:00 AM for the program. Speakers are from the Open Table of West Illinois who will share their successes with individuals and families impacted by generational poverty.

All women the of church are invited to attend. RSVP by Oct 12th to Pam Van Kirk.

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

Meet Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry



On October 1st, this year, the 5th presiding bishop of the ELCA began his term. The Rev. Yehiel Curry is the first African American to lead the ELCA which was formed in 1988 as a merger of previous Lutheran denominational groups.

Bishop Curry is 53, he was born and raised on the southside of Chicago, the 7th of 11 children. Bishop Curry was actually raised attending a Catholic church and attended Catholic schools through college. While in his early 20's he and his wife, LaShonda, began attending Shekinah Chapel which was a new start Lutheran congregation in Chicago.

For the Curry family, attending Shekinah wasn't so much about it being Lutheran, but instead, because it featured mentoring programs for young Black men, and Bishop Curry believed he could connect some of his middle school students with the program. Bishop Curry began his career life as a social worker then became a teacher, a profession his wife still holds.

While attending Shekinah Chapel, the ministry there was growing, and so too was his role. Bishop Curry would become a lay leader, and a worship leader, and a preacher, and would begin seminary while continuing to serve there. In 2009, Bishop Curry was ordained as an ELCA pastor.

Later in 2019, Bishop Curry was elected as the synod bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, a position he was re-elected to just earlier this year at their synod assembly.

Bishop Curry, as the first African American to lead the ELCA, represents a milestone for our denomination. We are traditionally one of the whitest denominations in America, we have very little diversity outside of which Scandinavian country our ancestors came from, or which German region other ancestors came from. Yet globally, our denomination is very diverse. So, Bishop Curry will bring a unique perspective to leading our church, one that is rooted in diversity, rooted in a growing congregation, rooted in a passion for social justice, and meeting the needs of those around us.

Join First Lutheran Church in keeping Bishop Curry in our prayers as he begins his six-year term as our presiding bishop.

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we write to you in this moment of national and global tension with clarity and conviction. Our faith compels us to stand where Jesus stands—with and for those whom society often seeks to exclude, erase, or diminish.

Our shared confession that every person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) grounds us in the conviction that all people possess inherent dignity. The incarnation of Jesus Christ reveals God's profound solidarity with humanity—especially with those who are marginalized or oppressed. The gospel we proclaim insists that our neighbor's need is the occasion for our love and that our public life is shaped by justice, mercy, and a commitment to the common good.

Further, we have a shared tradition in our social teachings which grounds us. The [ELCA's Social Message on Immigration](#) reminds us:

"We are to respond to newcomers as we would to Christ—welcoming them, meeting their immediate needs, and advocating for justice in our laws and policies."

Likewise, our recently adopted [Social Statement Faith and Civic Life](#) affirms that Christians are called to be *"a public witness, holding leaders accountable when they fail to protect the vulnerable."*

We are living through a time when vulnerable communities are being scapegoated and attacked. Immigrants and refugees are vilified, though Scripture commands us to welcome the stranger. People of color continue to bear the devastating weight of racism woven into the fabric of our society. Transgender people, beloved by God, are being targeted with laws and rhetoric that deny their dignity and even their right to exist. These assaults on our siblings are not political abstractions—they are deep wounds in the body of Christ.

In this time of division and fear, we, as people grounded in our faith, insist on love. This commitment flows from our faith in Christ crucified and risen—the One whose love breaks down barriers, confronts hatred, and transforms hearts.

Love insists on the **dignity of every human being**.

Love insists on **justice** for the marginalized and oppressed.

Love insists that the **church must reflect God's diverse, life-giving community**.

Love insists that **we listen, speak, and act with respect**, even in disagreement.

Love insists on **hope**, trusting that God's kingdom of justice and peace will prevail.

This love also compels us to speak clearly against Christian Nationalism, which our Churchwide Assembly named as a distortion of the Christian faith and an unhealthy form of patriotism. Christian Nationalism confuses the Gospel with political power, turns God into a mascot for the state, and privileges some people over others based on race, religion, or birthplace. This is not the way of Jesus. The kingdom of God is not a nation, not a culture, not a political ideology—it is God's reign of love, justice, and mercy for all people.

Therefore, as bishops of this church, we declare that the ELCA cannot be silent. Our call is clear:

- To proclaim the God-given dignity of every human being.
- To resist systems and ideologies, including Christian Nationalism, that oppress, dehumanize, or erase.
- To stand shoulder to shoulder with those who are targeted or harmed.
- To bear public witness that the love of Christ is stronger than fear, stronger than hatred, and stronger than death.
We call on all members of the ELCA to join us in prayer, advocacy, and action:
- Pray for those who are vulnerable and for all who work for justice.
- Advocate in your communities, legislatures, and Congress for laws that protect migrants, advance racial justice, and safeguard LGBTQIA+ people.
- Engage in the holy work of hospitality, creating spaces of safety, affirmation, and belonging for all God's children.
- Model respectful dialogue in a polarized world, seeking understanding rooted in love.
- Hold fast to hope, trusting that the Spirit is still at work renewing creation and reconciling the world to God.
In baptism, we are marked with the cross of Christ forever. That cross is not only a sign of our hope—it is also a summons to follow Jesus into solidarity with those who suffer.

In the power of the Spirit, let us be bold. Let us be faithful. Let us insist on love—in our words, our actions, our public witness, and our life together.

Together in Christ,
Bishop Stacie Fidler, Northern Illinois Synod

Additionally signed by 48 other synod bishops from around the ELCA, for a complete list, please ask Pastor Jamie, or look for the social media post about this on the Northern Illinois Synod FB page.



Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

Reformation Day is right around the corner. It is a day we traditionally wear red, so this is your first invite to wear red on that day.

Red is the color of the Holy Spirit, and we mark Pentecost Day also with the color red.

The Holy Spirit breathes new life into God's people, and clears the way for new things to come from the church.

As you come for worship, where is the Holy Spirit breathing new life into you? Where are new things happening because the winds of God are blowing away old things, clearing the path for newness?

All Saints Day follows on the very next Sunday. This day gives us a chance to pause and remember those who have died and entered their promised rest. If you have a loved one you would like to hear named during our All Saints Remembrance moment, please share that with Pastor Jamie before October 31st.

Worship Guild Members

October 19 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Diane Carlson
Reader:	Kurt Volz
Com Asst:	Steve Erlandson
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Carolyn Kellert

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

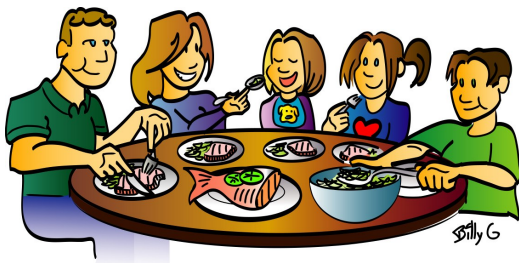
Usher:	Adam Sanberg
Reader:	Trace Gallagher
Com Asst:	Doug Cruce
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren



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

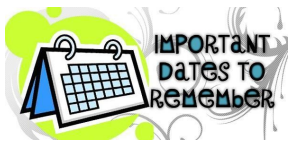
Thursday, October 23, from noon to 1 PM

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 12th—Ordinary Time

Tues, Oct 14 10 AM BYOB&B Study
6 PM Council

Wed, Oct 15 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sat, Oct 18 8:30 AM WELCA Southwest
Conference Fall Gathering

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

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



Oct 16 Ayla Johnston

Oct 18 Loretta Reynolds

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 15 Ken & Teresa Miller

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,



Jesus concluded the parable by saying, "Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold." — Mark 4:8

As our harvest comes in from the fields, it was a nice opportunity on Sunday to hear some harvest related parables and teachings by Jesus. And we got to sing a few more harvest themed hymns to help get us into our fall mood. Any day now the leaves will finish changing colors, painting our landscape in bright reds, yellows, and oranges, and then the work of clearing our lawns and raking the backyards will begin. This harvest backdrop of our autumn months, and the harvest themes of our scripture readings and hymns from Sunday lead us to wonder what kind of harvest is our faith yielding today.

Jesus uses the farming imagery, much as he used the fishing imagery, as a way to connect with his listeners. It is to say the Kingdom of God is not some theoretical exercise left only to scholars and theologians with fancy degrees. But instead the Kingdom of God is for all of us, and we can all easily understand how it works. The Kingdom works just like any farm, with seed that is planted—our faith is planted in our lives. And this faith grows, much like our crops in the field, with plenty of fertilizing and watering and sunshine and regular checks to make sure the grain is appearing. And this faith is harvested, again, like combining corn or soybeans, producing massive quantities of fruit and grain.

Our faith needs to be nurtured with fertilizer and water and sunshine, and we do that with worship and Bible studies. Growing in faith doesn't end just because we were confirmed or passed high school. Faith doesn't stop because we went to worship once, either, it must be continually fed. And even when a harvest comes in, that isn't the end of faith, for the fields needs to be prepared and planted again for the next season—so our faith needs to be prepared and readied for what comes next as well.

This is a metaphor that just keeps on giving. And perhaps that is why Jesus went back to it so many times. What is the seed of faith in you doing? Is it lying dormant? Is it still in a planter waiting to get put into some good soil? Is there some fertilizing your faith needs? What harvest are you expecting from your faith crop? The church is a place where we all get to ponder these wonders of our faith, and where we can join in the joy of growing together and learning more and producing more yield. May we be a church where we gather gladly and grow in our faith more joyfully. Peace, Pastor Jamie