



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 :: November 3, 2025

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Vice President: Chip Algren

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Pam Best

Brian Elliott

Adam Sanberg

Kurt Volz

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

As you are reading this newsletter on Monday my heart is still overflowing from the joy of a powerful worship experience at Faith Lutheran in Rochelle yesterday afternoon. Our synod gathered for a worship and reception to celebrate raising over a quarter million dollars for ELCA World Hunger. Folks from all over the Northern Illinois Synod came to hear an inspiring sermon from Bishop Stacie Fidler, hear the final number raised from our synod's matching giving campaign, and be encouraged for continued support of our denomination's primary ministry addressing hunger domestically and internationally. I will have pictures and a video link in a future newsletter.

While we had a tremendous outpouring of support for ELCA World Hunger in our own congregation, it is now time to once again turn to supporting our local food pantry. A Shopping Cart for Jamieson Center will be placed in our sanctuary. Please bring non-perishable items to donate to Jamieson Center. Each Monday, the cart will be emptied and items will be delivered to Jamieson Center. In December, we will use our Vision and Purpose Giving to raise specific funds for the Jamieson Center. But in the meanwhile, consider each time you go to the grocery store, stocking up on common items that are useful at a food pantry—soups, canned vegetables, pastas and sauces, rice, canned meats, and also hygiene and bathroom paper products. These are just a few examples of common items food pantries always need more of. Anything you bring follows the Matthew 25 call to serve Jesus through serving the least of the brothers and sisters among us.

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**

Advent Season Is Coming

Join us for Advent Wednesdays—Dec 3, 10, and 17 — 6 PM Soup Suppers and Advent Wreath Devotions—a congregation activity and a take home family activity.

Sign up in the Narthex to bring a crock-pot of soup. Our Wreath Devotion Theme for this season will be: Watch, Wait, Wonder.

Gathering on Wednesdays in a busy season may seem counter-intuitive ... but maybe you are too busy on weekends to gather for worship; or, maybe you just need an extra moment to catch your breath and to focus on something other than the commercialization of the season.

Plus, Christmas Eve worship is Wednesday, December 24th—so this series will lead us well into that night's celebration. Join us, invite your friends and neighbors and people you know who may be missing a connection to our congregation.

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

Revised Congregation Constitution

Our Congregation Council has been working on revising our congregation constitution. The Northern Illinois Synod has a committee that helps congregations as well, and after consulting with this committee, our council is ready to present to the congregation the revised constitution. You may find a digital copy on our church website “www.flcmonmouth.org”. Click the “resources” tab and then click the “congregation documents” tab. For a print copy, please call the church office or Pastor Jamie and a print copy will be provided for you.

There will be an information meeting following worship on Sunday, December 7 to discuss the revisions. There will be a congregation meeting to approve the new constitution on Sunday, January 4th. The ratification vote will take place during our annual meeting on Sunday, January 25th.

Monmouth Roseville High School

Madrigals

Join us for worship on Sunday, November 30th as we begin our Advent season with the gift of music.

The Monmouth Roseville High School Madrigals will join us during worship to perform. This is an opportunity for them to thank us for all the ways we support the music program, and a way for us to raise funds for their program. A collection basket will be set out for contributions to support the high school music department activities.

The ELCA, a Primer

As we have been learning about our denomination, we have read about how our ancestral heritage led to our being a part of the ELCA, and how a sense of common worship, through the publishing of a previous hymnal, helped in the early stages of forming the ELCA.

The ELCA as a denomination emphasizes that there are three-expressions of the church: the churchwide (national), the Synod (regional), and the Congregation (local). These three expressions of the church are both intertwined and independent. We are intertwined with the synod and the churchwide expressions in that we accomplish larger ministry aims collectively better than we can independently. We are independent from the synod and the churchwide because we have self-determining control found here at the congregation level.

All three expressions have a similar basic ecclesiology (fancy church word for understanding church governance.) The congregation has designated roles for a pastor-council and members. The synod has designated roles for a bishop-council-voting delegates. The churchwide also has roles for a bishop-council-voting delegates. What is interesting is we often think in business terms of top-down structures, where a CEO at the top makes decisions that the business boards agree to and the rest of the business just follows. As the ELCA, we do not have that model. We have a bottom-up flow chart. The power of the congregation is with the members, and the congregation meeting. The council and the pastor support the work of the congregation. Similarly in the synod and the churchwide, the power rests in the synod assembly or the churchwide assembly, where the bishops and the synod or churchwide councils support the work that has been approved by those assemblies.

This is a very oversimplification, sure, but I have 1 half-page column to express this. What this boils down to is a reminder that there are no top-down declarations from our congregation pastor, synod bishop, or our presiding bishop. There is the work approved by members of congregations and by voting delegates at assemblies that our pastors, bishops and their staffs, and the councils at all three levels are then called to see happen. We are ELCA-Lutheran Christians because we believe the church is not a top-down ‘head honcho’ driven movement. We are a God calls all the people to be the church, and as a church we have structure that helps us hear that call and live that call for the common good of all.



Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

The season of Fall is a season of preparing congregation ministry budgets. Our budget is a faith statement—it says we believe in God so much that here is what we do together to make God's ministry happen in and through First Lutheran Church.

When we say we will provide our offerings, we are saying God's Kingdom matters so much we will contribute a portion of what we have to see that it happens. We know our ministry connects with Monmouth and beyond through supporting local agencies, global ministries, providing day care and preschool, supporting scouting units, being a space to gather for groups, being a place people come to for help, being a place where people are better equipped to serve elsewhere, and so much more.

Later this month, you will receive your stewardship invitation letter from our stewardship team. This is an opportunity to express your faith by declaring your support for the ministry here at First. Take time to pray about your support of the ministry here, and let God speak joy in and through you as you share with our stewardship team how you plan to support our shared ministry throughout 2026.

Worship Guild Members

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

November 23 — Christ the King Sunday

Usher:	Mark Shrader
Reader:	Pam Van Kirk
Com Asst:	Chip Algren
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

November 30 — Advent 1

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



Northern Illinois Synod Diakonia Retreat

You are invited to join the Northern Illinois Synod diakonia Steering Committee for this year's diakonia retreat. Held at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (1834 S IL Route 2 Oregon, IL) on November 8th from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm.

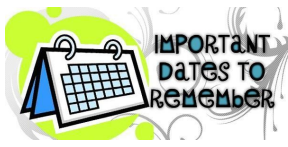
Life can feel overwhelming at times with the many things vying for our attention: work obligations, family life, news highlighting the brokenness of the world. In this day-long retreat, we will introduce spiritual practices that are aimed at helping you reconnect to the divine when you can find rest and renewal. These spiritual practices are also ones that you can introduce to your own faith communities. Join us for a day of renewal and reconnection. **This retreat is open to everyone.**

For more info or to register, go to www.nisynod.org

Decorating for Advent/Christmas

Join us on Sunday, November 23rd as we decorate our worship space for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Advent begins on November 30th, and we will have our worship space all ready to go for the season.

It is a joy to see the decorations go up and fill our worship space.



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

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 9:30 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 9:30 AM The Chosen Watch Party

(final two episodes)

Sunday, November 9th — Ordinary Time

Tues, Nov 11 10 AM BYOB&B Study

6 PM Council meeting

Sat, Nov 15 12 noon—Pathways/ Council
lunch workshop

Sunday, November 16th — Ordinary Time

Mon, Nov 17th 6:30 PM Pathways meeting

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



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 20 Lewis Sanberg

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



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, Teresa Eyler

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

Once again this November, we will be supporting our Lutheran Preschool and Day Care. Each Christmas season, the Preschool and Day Care staff select items to purchase as “Christmas gifts” to the center. These are wrapped and joyfully opened by the students of the center.

Our Vision and Purpose Giving will help the staff in getting items for the center.

Thank you for all the ways you support the Preschool and Day Care center here at our church.

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 == \$261.00

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but [Jesus] was asleep. And [the disciples] went and woke him up, saying, “Lord save us! We are perishing!” Matthew 8:24-25

In our recent Bible study with our Presbyterian and Methodist church friends, we discussed the name of God as revealed to Moses in Exodus. The name is Yahweh; and as we read through the Old Testament we see various traditions that used Yahweh for God’s name while other traditions to use other names like “El” for God. The name Yahweh is a curious one for scholars who have been searching for its roots. One of those roots may be in a neighboring semitic group of peoples to the ancient Hebrews, who had in their pantheon of gods a storm deity who shares a quite similar name with Yahweh. Could the Hebrew people have latched on to this storm deity and claimed it for their own God? There is a strong case for that being made by scholars. And then of course, in that story with Moses, the ancient writers of Exodus used that story to give Yahweh a new background story, defining the name as “I Am Who I Am”, or sometimes just simply named “I Am.”

It may be why in three of our Gospels, including Matthew cited above, we have Jesus calming a storm the disciples experience while crossing the sea of Galilee. This is an opportunity to see Jesus display power over nature. This is an opportunity to once again strike against the connection between Yahweh and the storm deity identity. This is an opportunity to demonstrate what faith should be like when we are experiencing storms both of the nature kind and of the emotional kind.

This last week a very real natural storm destroyed the island nation of Jamaica. Hurricane Melissa strengthened to one of the strongest hurricanes on record as it slammed into Jamaica. Haiti and Cuba have also suffered, and Bermuda is next in line, though the storm has weakened and will continue to weaken as it heads over cooler waters. As of Oct 30, 28 are reported dead, though search and recovery efforts are still on-going. In the southwest of Jamaica, it is estimated that 90% of structures have lost roofs.

Was Jesus just sleeping in the back of the metaphorical boat? Or is this an opportunity for the church to once again rise up with the faith we have been given? It is probably more that later. I encourage you to use Lutheran Disaster Response on our ELCA Website (www.elca.org) or Lutheran World Relief (www.lwr.org) as places to send relief support donations to. Our church has ministries already in the Caribbean and partner ministries providing relief are already taking in action. There will be many organizations looking for donations during this disaster season. Always double check that you are supporting a reputable organization and that your donations are going straight to the relief. We, the Church, are called to the work of calming the storm—and we do so by supporting relief efforts.

Peace, Pastor Jamie