



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 :: April 14, 2025

Our Staff

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Secretary: Diane Carlson

Chip Algren

Pam Best

Brian Elliott

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Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

Thank you to everyone who came to the prayer service for immigrants and refugees. We had 50 people attend from many faith traditions here in Monmouth. Pastor Shelly of the Methodist Church, Pastor John, chaplain at Monmouth College, and I co-led the service which was based on a resource from Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services). Pastor Shelly offered a wonderful reflection on community lament, that included a time for lighting candles to show our solidarity with those being impacted. I led a reflection on advocacy and how to avoid hardened hearts, but instead remaining active with our elected officials. Pastor John led a reflection on community repentance and our call to own how we as a nation are at this junction and how we actively lean on our faith in Jesus to use the ethic of love to bring us through this junction to a better place. A time of cookies and fellowship ended the evening.

And on Thursday, it was announced that a federal judge issued an order blocking deportation of immigrants and refugees who came to the US through legal programs. This is good news, this is our prayers and advocacy at work. This is the church standing up in our community for the right things. We continue to pray this judicial order is followed and our good neighbors who have been threatened with deportation are able to remain our good neighbors here in Monmouth.

Please note, as you review the Holy Week Schedule below, that our Easter breakfast and family activities that were initially planned for the Narthex are now being held in the basement fellowship room. See you all at each of our Holy Week worship events.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM Worship

**A spring Bible study will be
announced soon**

Holy Week Worship Schedule

Join us for worship this Holy Week, and celebrate the central stories to our faith.



Holy Week

Maundy Thursday is April 17th,
6 PM worship in the chapel

Good Friday is April 18th,
6 PM worship in the chapel

Easter Sunday is April 20th
gather at 9AM for a light Easter
Breakfast and activities for families —
MOVED TO THE FELLOWSHIP HALL
10 AM Easter Worship

Synod Assembly Delegates

Every year our congregation participates in the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly. We are able to send 2 delegates. The Assembly is an opportunity to learn more about our shared ministry with congregations across northern Illinois, to discuss resolutions that impact our ministry together, and to pass a synod budget. The assembly is a 2 day event held at Augustana College in Rock Island. This year the assembly takes place on Friday, June 13 and Saturday, June 14.

We are in need of two volunteers to attend this year's assembly. Delegates need to be confirmed members of the congregation. If you are interested in learning more about assembly or are willing to attend for the congregation, please speak with either Pastor Jamie or Council President Pam Van Kirk.

Community Care Days

Community Care Days will be held this year on June 13th and 14th

Applications for projects you would like done by a community care days volunteer are now available in the office.

Volunteers are needed to help accomplish the projects that are approved. Please speak with Steve Erlandson about your availability to help on either Friday, June 13th or Saturday, June 14th. Basic home skills needed, but all the supplies are provided, and you will be working with other volunteers to accomplish these tasks.

Spring Bible Study

Join us beginning Wednesday, May 7th at 10 AM for a 4-week Bible study on the book of Revelation.

We will have an introduction/overview of the whole book. We will dive into some of the fascinating imagery and themes covered in the book. We will unravel long-held myths that the book does not do.

For instance—Revelation is not a story of the Rapture. Revelation is not a road map to how the world will end. Revelation is not a divination of future events at all. Revelation does not contain a mark of the beast that is translatable into any world order, any computer system, or any other myth that has become associated with.

Revelation is apocalyptic literature, it was written to exhort its readers to have the faith to survive the days they were currently living in.

Revelation is a fascinating book, that almost didn't make it into the canon of the Bible to begin with, was almost taken out of the canon by Martin Luther, and yet remains in the canon for us to learn what it means to have faith in Christ through whatever days we are enduring.

So let's gather and look at this fascinating book on the four Wednesdays of May. For more information, please speak with Pastor Jamie.

Strom Center Lenten Gatherings

The final Strom Center Lenten breakfast is this week.

Breakfast begins at 6:45 AM at the Strom Center:

April 18th (Good Friday) Heritage Bible Church



Holy Week



Holy Week

April 13 through April 18

Holy week concludes our Lenten season as we recall the stories of Jesus' last supper, betrayal, arrest, trials, and crucifixion.

A brand new season of the church year begins on Sunday, April 20th. The Season of Easter. The Easter celebration is 7 weeks long, a week of weeks, metaphorically speaking. And while the resurrection appearances are few in the Gospels, the good news focuses on Jesus' life and continuing life through the church. Jesus now gives to us not just the gift of everlasting life after we die, Jesus gives to us the gift of living everlasting love today. That is the ultimate gift of Easter, and that is why we retell the story of Jesus' passion every year.

Join us these special holy days and then on Easter Sunday, too, as we are renewed in the gift of everlasting life tomorrow, and the gift of living everlasting love today.

Sacred Prayer

Almighty God, look with loving mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

The prayer of the day appointed for Good Friday worship.

Worship Guild Members

<u>April 17— Maundy Thursday</u>	<u>April 18 — Good Friday</u>
Usher: Doug Cruce	N/A
Reader: Steve Erlandson	Pam Van Kirk
Com Asst: Robin Johnson	N/A
Musician: Janice Algren	Carolyn Kellert

April 20 — Easter Sunday

Usher: Ray Golden
Reader: Pam Best
Com Asst: Adam Sanberg
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

April 27 — Easter 2nd Sunday

Usher: Diane Carlson
Reader: Judy Sanberg
Com Asst: Doug Cruce
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

May 4 — Easter 3rd Sunday

Usher: Pam Van Kirk
Reader: Ellen Shrader
Com Asst: David Sandstrom
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Carolyn Kellert



Upcoming Holy Days

Maundy Thursday, named for the Latin Word Maundatum, meaning Commandment, is the night we remember Jesus' last supper with the disciples and his giving the commandment to love one another as he has loved us.

Good Friday, taking its name from the idea that God's Salvation is good for all humanity and all creation, is the day we remember Jesus' horrific crucifixion and express our deep sadness that God's own Son was killed because the political and religious systems of the day were opposed to his message of radical love and peace and justice.

This year, perhaps more than any other, we gather to remember the commandment to love as today's political system stands equally opposed to Jesus' ways.



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, April 13th — Palm Sunday

Thu, Apr 17 - 6 PM Maundy Thursday worship

Fri, Apr 18 - 6 PM Good Friday worship

Both in the Chapel

Sunday, April 20th — Easter Sunday

Sun, Apr 20—9 AM Easter Breakfast/
Family Activities

10 AM Easter Worship

Mon, Apr 21 - Office is Closed

Newsletter will be out April 22nd

Sunday, April 27th—2nd Easter Sunday

Mon, Apr 28—Wed, Apr 30

Pastor attends Continuing Education Event

Next newsletter is May 5th

Sunday, May 4th — 3rd Easter Sunday

Mon, May 5th—9:30 AM Sarah Circle

7 PM Building/Grounds Committee

Wed, May 7th—10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, May 11th—4th Easter Sunday,

Sun, May 11th—Mothers' Day

Mon, May 12th—6 PM Council *(date change)

Wed, May 14th—10 AM Bible Study

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



Apr 13 Elise Blaesing

Apr 16 Nate Gallagher

Apr 18 Chip Algren

Apr 20 Diane Carlson

Apr 20 Warren Dobry

Apr 23 Lindsay Martin

Apr 23 Rob Ravel

Apr 25 Dave Erlandson

May 6 Andrew Youngquist

May 7 Jacob Ide

May 8 Sophie Shrader

May 9 Pastor Katie

Gallagher

May 16 Shelly Golden

May 18 Todd Champion

May 19 Carl Hamburg

May 22 Linda Ellison

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 Dean Sandstrom

May 31 Tammy Slater

Jun 2 Alexia Golden

Jun 2 Jarrod Hippen

Jun 2 Susie Jurgens



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 11 David & DeeDee Yez

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

Jul 2 Jeremy & Wendy

Anderson

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Emily Agema, Cecil Lovdahl, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Hannah Taylor, Suzanne Lovdahl, Wes Lovdahl, Christopher Greene, Grace Banks

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

The final amount raised for ELCA World Hunger will be announced next week.

For April, we will be supporting the Special Olympics. We had a guest speaker on Sunday, April 6th, to talk about what the Special Olympics means for her and to encourage our giving for April. Special Olympics helps a lot of people, over 25,000 in just Illinois.

Join us throughout April in supporting the Warren County Falcon Special Olympic team.,

January, Strom Center == \$250.00

February, Lutheran Disaster Response == \$515.00

March, ELCA World Hunger == \$2,609

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, Mosaic,

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."

Luke 23:34

We will be reading the entire Passion story according to Luke on Palm Sunday. We will be reading the entire Passion story according to John on Good Friday. These long readings are the story that centers our faith. Jesus was betrayed, arrested, put through sham trials before the religious authorities and the political authorities, and then crucified by soldiers who were just doing their job. There are many ways to understand the full meaning of Jesus' death. Whether it is a meaning that Jesus died for individual sins, for the brokenness of the whole world, was an unjust victim of a corrupt system, or many other interpretations.

I want to center in on this one sentence that Jesus says in Luke's Gospel. This saying of Jesus is only recorded in Luke. It is spoken as the soldiers are pounding nails through his hands and feet. And it is something Jesus most likely never said. WHAT?! But it is in scripture. Well, there is a fascinating story to this sentence. Because it is a beloved sentence, when we hear it, we naturally think Jesus would forgive those who were pounding metal spikes through his flesh and bone, as blood dripped from the holes in his head from the crown of thorns. If anyone could forgive his executioners, it would be Jesus, right? Well, scholars who study ancient manuscripts have found that this sentence is not in all of the earliest manuscripts. Leading to questions — like why add it if it was not written by the original author? And also, why omit it if it was written by the original author?

Questionable origins or not, this sentence remains in our English translation, so we are left to answer the question ourselves—did Jesus forgive his executioners as he felt the rusty metal ripping open his flesh, driving his body onto that heavy, coarse, splinter-riddled cross? Because if we are able to answer that question by saying, well of course Jesus did, then we have to ask ourselves the next tough question—what is Jesus able to then forgive in us, after all we are not exactly driving any nails into him. And also, we have to ask ourselves—what are we then to forgive in others—especially as they are not exactly executing us right now. See, this uncertain verse is left here, with its questionable origins, because it sounds authentic enough of Jesus to have said it; so now we can have forgiveness true and authentic in us and through us to all who need it.

Peace, Pastor Jamie