



# JANUARY

Our Church—This week  
for the week of  
January 11, 2021

## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

116 S. B Street, Monmouth, IL 61462; (309)734-2106  
www.flcmonmouth.org; email: office@flcmonmouth.org



FIRST LUTHERAN MONN MOUTH  
@FLCMONMOUTH.ORG

### Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher

prjamie@flcmonmouth.org

Cell (630)200-3550

Secretary

Angela Bradley-Volz

office@flcmonmouth.org

M, T, Th, F (8 am to noon)

Custodian

Chris Algren

Musicians

Janice Algren

Jamie Reynolds

Preschool and Day Care Director

Bobbie Nees

(309) 734-5350

### Congregation Council

President: Rose Sandstrom

Vice President: Doug Cruce

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Warren Dobry

Steve Erlandson

Ted Hanson

Jim Johnson

Linda McGuire

Evelyn Volz

Dear Friends and Family,

Sometimes we just need a good distraction from the daily grind and anxieties. One of my recent distractions has been a movie marathon of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. I have watched the first 19 movies and I am hoping to have the final four done this week, since I am watching them with my daughter and she heads back to college at the end of this week. Many of these MCU films I saw in the theaters, quite a few I had not seen before.

There are times these movies have parallels to our modern world and the unraveling political landscape around us. Other times, it is just nice to be somewhere else for a little while.

Are you finding something as a distraction? Is there a way you give yourself a reprieve from our nerve-wracking world? It is good to do that, to disconnect for a while, to recharge and re-center. If anyone is a fan of the MCU movies and wants a place to discuss superheroes and parallels to our world, let me know.

### **Faith active in Learning**

Faith is an on-going, life-long learning adventure. Sure, we remember good times as children in Sunday school, being rewarded for perfect attendance and memorization of Bible verses and catechism pages. Sure, we long to see that happening again for a new generation of students. But we cannot let go of our need for on-going, life-long learning.

Growing in faith does not end at confirmation. We are always learning. First Lutheran provides weekly Zoom Bible studies and weekly Living the Creed PDF's to foster an environment of on-going, life-long learning.

You are invited to join the Wednesday afternoon Bible study as we continue through the Gospel of Mark. The Zoom invite is included in the email that accompanied this newsletter.

You are invited to download and print off the weekly PDF's and work through the Living the Creed exercises as a family. This is a way to connect to God's Word and grow as a family as you talk about what faith means to you.

Does learning about faith look like what it did when we were children? No, it does not. Nor will it ever look that way again. But opportunities are still provided and it is up to us to continue this adventure of on-going, life-long learning.

### *Our Stewardship Ministry*



Your gifts make a difference in our community and our world. As the Magi brought their gifts to the newborn Jesus, we bring our gifts to celebrate the fullness of Jesus the Christ.

Stewardship is our shared responsibility in making the ministry of Jesus Christ known in Monmouth and beyond. All that you give is vital to our ministry and is a celebration of your thankfulness to God.



Bradley Anderson, Josie Blake, Bev Coulter, Nancy Dowell, John Ellison, Linda Ellison, Dave Erlandson, Jim Erlandson, Brad and Jodie Haist, Cassie Jern & Family, Delores Johnson, Graham Johnson, Bob Kerschke, Ila Roseberry, Norman Worthington, Evelyn Volz, Darrell Thirtyacre, Donna Larson, Beckie Bean, Joy Johnson, Pat Root, Diane Bradley, Anna Lovdahl, Kim Anderson, Matthew Council, Rose Youngquist, Kathi Cruce, Craig Jones

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

### **Lutheran Day Care and Preschool**



A ministry of First Lutheran Church  
Bobbi Nees, director

Our students were very excited to return to the preschool and day care this last week. They were really excited, too, to open the gifts and begin playing with their new toys and games.

This center provides such a meaningful experience for these kids, and while it certainly is different having fewer students as a result of the pandemic, the impact remains the same for those who are here. And that impact is a sign of this church's love for the community in continuing to provide such a vital resource.

### **Christ in our Home**

The three-month daily devotional booklet is available. The new book covers January, February and March. If you would like a copy, please call or email the church office and one can be mailed to you.

Having a daily devotional opens our heart to the Word of God in a refreshing way. The scriptures and the brief messages allow for personal reflection and deeper connection with God.

The booklet is published four times a year and is provided to members free of charge.

### **What's Happening in January at First Lutheran?**

After the very busy season of Advent and Christmas, it feels like there is not much on the calendar in January. But there are a few things to be reminded of:

**Worship remains online** through at-least January 17th. Updates will be made through our future Our Church-This Week newsletters.

**The Church Council meeting is rescheduled to Wednesday, January 13 at 7PM**

**Pastor Jamie will be out of the office** from January 14th to January 22nd. He will be assisting his daughter return to college and attending a continuing education retreat.

**The Council has scheduled the Annual meeting** for January 31st. At the January 12th meeting, the Council will discuss appropriate ways to have this meeting. It may be digital. More information will come out after that meeting.

**The mid-week Bible study** will resume on January 13th, will skip January 20th, and continue again on January 27th.

And just for fun, mark your calendars for **Ash Wednesday, February 17th**. We do not yet know how we will celebrate Ash Wednesday or Lent. Those plans are still being worked out. But it is approaching quickly.

## Celebrations for January 16 to 31



Jan 16 Jared Longtin  
Jan 17 Rose Sandstrom  
Jan 19 Sydney Tate  
Jan 30 Jeremy Bruce, Kay Lovdahl, Melba Matson  
Kristin Wolf  
Jan 31 Evelyn Volz



Jan 18 Delmar and Judy Champion (62 years)

*Please let the church office know any updates that are needed  
for our celebrations list.*

## Curious about our Ministries?

We have several committees that are continuing to work even during this time of pandemic. For information on how to join a committee, please call the office.

### Active Committees

Finance/Stewardship .. Chair Gary Martin

Building and Grounds .. Chair Steve Erlandson

Worship and Music ... Council Rep Jim Johnson

### Specific Elected Committees

Endowment

Memorial

Personnel

Preschool and Day Care Board

Committee being revitalized

Christian Education and Youth — Youth Happens at First

### Weekly Devotional



But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

Romans 8:20-21

One year ago, I attended a week-long retreat to develop worship resources themed to celebrate God active in creation. The group was comprised of clergy from around the Northern Illinois Synod and a resource person who teaches at Lexington Theological Seminary. Our work focused on four elements of creation: Wilderness, Forests, Rivers and Streams, and Prairie and Land. Our congregation used the worship resources developed at that retreat in November.

Next week, I will once again join the group of clergy from around our synod as we develop new worship resources focused on four new creation themes: Oceans and Lakes, Animals and Critters, Storm and Weather, and Cosmos. I am looking forward to engaging with my fellow clergy on these themes and discovering the fullness of God's activity in creation once again.

It feels weird to be taking a break from pandemic and political turmoil to focus on something like creation, but it will be quite rejuvenating as well. Focusing on creation is one way to remind us that God is still very active in the world. We sometimes feel like God is absent, what with all the bad things happening. But God is far from absent. God is very near to us.

If we take a moment to be still and let God be active in creation, we might just discover God very active in our lives as well. If we take a moment to be still and let God be active in creation, we might just hear our call to care for creation in new ways. If God is active in our lives, and if God is calling for us to care for creation in new ways, we might just discover how we are to love one another. Yes, our love for one another is connected to our caring for the creation which is connected to our awareness that God is very active in creation.

I am not sure when we will use these new worship resources here at First Lutheran, but when we do, I am sure we will all be rejuvenated by the God who is very active in creation.

In Peace,

Pastor Jamie