



Our Church—This Week
for May 6, 2024

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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FIRST LUTHERAN MONN MOUTH
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Gathered by God, We Live Our Faith with: Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy.

Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher
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Custodian
Chris Algren

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Dear Friends and Family,

This weekend I had the joy of experiencing a couple of firsts. I had the joy of watching my first-born graduate college. I could brag about her accomplishments all day, but beyond saying that, I won't. You know as a parent, an uncle or aunt, a grandparent, this joy. The only sadness about this is I don't know when I will next get to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan next. It is a place we find very special for our family. So it was bittersweet to say farewell to that place, for now.

A second first I had actually comes on Monday, this week. I will experience my first ever MRI. I have been dealing with some form of an injury in my right shoulder, and this MRI is one more step in the process of diagnosing my injury and leading to whatever will be the path of healing. I have no idea yet what that path is going forward, but I will be greatly relieved when I have this whole thing behind me and I once again have full range of motion without pain in my right shoulder/upper arm. I hope you all have a great week, filled with the best kind of joys the beginning of May can bring.

Congregation Council

President: Pam Van Kirk
Vice President: Ray Golden
Secretary: Diane Carlson
Chip Algren
Pam Best
Brian Elliott
Adam Sanberg
Mark Shrader
** one seat remains vacant in honor of Evelyn Volz

Walking Together, an insert from the Northern Illinois Synod

Our Northern Illinois Synod is providing a new quarterly insert to share news from across the synod in a simple way. You will find this new quarterly insert copied on page 3 of this week's newsletter. I apologize it is sideways to the normal way our text is printed, it is how the insert is formatted from the synod office.

This insert is called "Walking Together," which is the literal translation of the word "synod." It reminds us of our connectedness across Northern Illinois with Lutheran congregations for the sake of ministry. This insert has a message from Bishop Stacie Fidlar and an update regarding this year's Synod Assembly. Which, we give thanks for Gary and Judy Sanberg and Trace Gallagher who will represent our congregation as voting delegates to this year's Synod Assembly. Trace represents our congregation as a youth member, but also has been nominated to serve on the Synod Council as a youth member. So we wish Trace well as we await the results of the assembly election to know if he gets the position.

Assistance Sought

A resident of Monmouth called the church, she is looking for assistance for some very light-household chores about once a week, maybe only a half-hour at most. She is also needing very occasional rides to doctor appointments. She lives on East 7th Avenue.

If you are interested, and available to work out a schedule with this person, please call Pastor Jamie to get connected with this person in our community.

Thank You Note Received

April 29, 2024

“Dear Pastor Gallagher,

Please express to the members of your congregation for \$433 from your recent fundraiser. Kiwanis’ mission is to support programs for local kids, so these funds will help. Thank you.

Julie Shaw, Past President.”

This thank you was received after I delivered our Vision and Purpose from February to the Kiwanis. Thank you for your continued support of our monthly Vision and Purpose giving.

Items for Sale

Robin Johnson and Dawn Johnson have a few items from their mother’s estate they are hoping to sell. If you would like more information on these items, please contact either Robin or Dawn.

Curio Cabinet (\$100)

Recliner (\$25)

Lift Chair (bought recently for \$1000, minimum offer \$500)

Queen Bed (\$100); Dresser and night table (\$100) or \$200 for set

Entertainment center for 55-inch TV (\$100)

Two small matching end tables (\$25) and two matching lamps (\$25)

Midweek Bible Study

Our Midweek Bible study continues for a couple more weeks. Join us Wednesday at 10 AM in Pastor Jamie’s office as we look at the four Gospels and their accounts of Jesus’ resurrection.

This week, we will be looking at Luke’s Gospel. What is unique about Luke? How does the road to Emmaus factor into this? What does it mean that Luke gives us a view of the ascension?

There are a lot of good questions here, and together we will have fun discussing these questions and more.

Mother’s Day Recognition

Sunday, May 12th is Mother’s Day. We will be recognizing all women who attend worship that day with a small gift of appreciation.

We give thanks to God for the gift of mothers, grandmothers, and all who are mother-figures in our lives. We grieve with all who have recently lost a mother/grandmother/motherly figure. We cry out with those who seek a more loving motherly figure in their live.

Semi-Annual Meeting

The May Semi-Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 19th at the end of worship. We will be electing a new member to council, we will be filling other committee positions.

It is a calling from the Holy Spirit to lead the congregation in these ways, a calling affirmed by the vote of the congregation. So, plan on joining us on May 19th.

Graduate Recognition

We will also be honoring Graduates on May 19th. So far, the office is aware of Elise and Madeline Blaesing, and Heide Gallagher, as high school or college grads. Please let the office know if you have a graduate this year that we can celebrate.

Walking Together



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

A Word from Bishop Stacie Fidler

The first question I asked people gathered for our Congregational Resourcing Event was this:

What's your favorite Bible story?

The answers came fast and furious, Hebrew Bible and New Testament. Good Samaritan. Woman at the Well. The resurrection. David and Goliath.

Now – tell me what that story has to do with your life. How does God's story of life and redemption and healing and reconciliation shape your life? Does that change the story – or how you think about it?

The arc of God's story with the beloved people of God's creation is long, but all along the way it is meant to shape us. That's why our ancestors recorded these stories in their minds and hearts and finally in writing. They wanted us to be shaped by them. They wanted us to learn from them. They wanted us to know deep within us how God's story never leaves us the same. **God's story is meant to be transformative.** It never leaves us the same.

That's why we are called as the people of God to be continually immersed in God's story. To open it in our lives and listen to how God is reaching out to us in this time and this place through the old, old story of love and life.

God's story, God's work through Jesus, is woven with your story. Your life is a story of redemption, time and again. Your life is a story of finding your authentic self, your home, your peace, in the heart of God's story. From the beginning of creation through the reconciling and healing work of Jesus and continually blowing through the Holy Spirit's nudging – God is always at work in you. On you. Among you.

Open God's Story in your life and listen. Open God's Story in your congregation – where is God's mission, Jesus' calling, leading you?

Synod Assembly 2024

The Thirty-Sixth Annual Northern Illinois Synod Assembly will be held on Friday, June 14th and Saturday, June 15th, 2024 at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. Every congregation will send voting members to gather under the theme of Open God's Story. We will be focusing on God's stories - both in scripture and in our lives - and how these stories change us. The Assembly will be joined by The Rev. Miguel Gomez-Acosta, the Senior Director for New Ministry Development and Evangelism at the Churchwide Office of the ELCA.

Outside of doing the business of the Synod, like passing the budget and electing people to various committees, we will have a Ministry Fair. This will be a time - with dessert - that is focused on celebrating ministry in and around our synod.

To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of ELCA World Hunger, the Social Ministry Committee encourages the congregations of the Northern Illinois Synod to have a food drive for your local food pantries during the time that an in-kind offering would have been collected for Synod Assembly. Our offering at our Festival Worship on Friday will be split between Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center and ELCA World Hunger, both celebrating 50 years of ministry.

You are invited to pray for your congregation's voting member as they join together in June.

Almighty God, shown fully to us in your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, we give you thanks that by your Holy Spirit you sustain the church. By the Spirit's power you call, gather, enlighten, and sanctify the whole church. Guide us into the ways that we can be your hands and feet and heart to bring healing, hope, and restoration and to cultivate life-giving relationships wherever possible, in order to find abundant life together. As the Holy Spirit continues to work among us and in us, we pray for the strengthening of our communities of faith, as we navigate new challenges and possibilities. Be with our synod staff and all pastors and leaders in congregations, and all who gather as your church everywhere. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.



NISYNOD

For more information
visit us at
www.nisynod.org



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May 2024



Easter

Sunday, March 31 to Sunday, May 19

The season of Easter is nearing its end. We celebrate the Resurrection for 7 weeks, representing a week of weeks. And the whole celebration comes to an end on the 8th Sunday after Easter Day, a day we call Pentecost.

This ancient pilgrimage festival was celebrated by Jewish people in Jerusalem as a harvest festival and a time to reconnect with the covenant between God and Noah.

The disciples had not left the city of Jerusalem to return home after Jesus' death and resurrection. They were instructed to remain in Jerusalem until they were given a sign—and what a sign they received. The Holy Spirit fell upon them as tongues of flame and with a loud rushing wind, the disciples were empowered to proclaim the Good News of Jesus in all the languages of the pilgrims who came to Jerusalem.

On Pentecost Sunday, and every Sunday with it, we continue to celebrate the many ways the Holy Spirit comes to us and empowers us to proclaim the Good News of Jesus to all our neighbors.

Worship Guild Members

May 12 — Easter 7th Sunday

Usher: Steve Erlandson
Reader: Paula Buban
Com Asst: David Sandstrom
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

May 19 — Pentecost Sunday

Usher: Pam Van Kirk
Reader: Madelyn Blaesing
Com Asst: Julie Blaesing
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

May 26 — Holy Trinity Sunday

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

June 2 — Ordinary Time

Usher: Ray Golden
Reader: Pam Best
Com Asst: N/A
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren



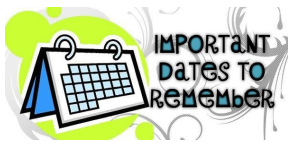
Celebrate the Renewal of the Narthex

The Narthex is our gathering space. The word Narthex comes to English from ancient Greek, and originally meant “giant fennel” referring to something like a schoolmaster’s cane. It is really unclear how the word came to be associated with the front porch or entrance area for a church. Yet the original meaning of the word in Greek has long been lost and now even in Greek, Narthex means the entrance to a church.

Our Narthex has gotten quite the make-over recently. It looks absolutely brilliant. Come on Sundays at 9:30 AM to get your cup of coffee or tea, or a juice box for the kids and celebrate our Narthex, our gathering space for the family of God.

Heide Gallagher Graduation Invitation

Pastor Jamie and family invites the congregation to celebrate Heide’s college graduation on Saturday, May 11 from noon to 3 PM here in the church basement. Heide graduates from Northern Michigan University with a degree in secondary music education, and will be teaching this fall at Indian Creek School District in Waterman and Shabbona, IL



Every Sunday
9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering
10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, May 5th Easter Sunday 6
 Mon, May 6 9:30 AM Sarah Circle
 7 PM Building and Grounds
 committee meeting

 Sunday, May 12th Easter Sunday 7
 Sun, May 12 Happy Mother's Day
 Tues, May 14 6 PM Council meeting

 Sunday, May 19th Pentecost Sunday
 Sun, May 19 Graduate Recognition
 Semi-Annual Meeting

 Sunday, May 26th Trinity Sunday
 Mon, May 27th Memorial Day, office
 closed
 Mon, May 27th to Thursday, June 6th,
 Pastor Jamie will be on vacation

 Sunday, June 2nd Ordinary Time
 Mon, Jun 3rd 9:30 AM Sarah Circle
 7 PM Building and Grounds Committee
 Meeting

 Sunday, June 9th Ordinary Time
 Tues Jun 11 6 PM Council Meeting
 Thurs, Jun 13 Strawberry Festival
 Fri/Sat Jun 14/15 Synod Assembly

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



May 6 Andrew Youngquist
 May 7 Jacob Ide
 May 8 Sophie Shrader
 May 16 Shelly Golden
 May 19 Carl Hamberg
 May 22 Linda Ellison
 May 22 Lorene Nelson
 May 25 Heide Gallagher
 May 26 David Sandstrom
 May 27 Charlotte Sanberg
 May 28 Nancy Reynolds
 May 31 Dean Sandstrom
 May 31 Tammy Slater
 Jun 2 Susie Jurgens
 Jun 6 Rose Younquist
 Jun 11 Wendy Anderson
 Jun 22 Denise Mann
 Jun 30 Colin Nuckles
 Jul 8 Marlene Moulden
 Jul 9 Cohen Anderson
 Jul 13 Reese Anderson
 Jul 15 Pastor Jamie
 Jul 17 Cecil Lovdahl
 Jul 19 Mark Shrader
 Aug 2 Karen Erlandson
 Aug 4 Doug Cruce
 Aug 13 Brandon Reynolds
 Aug 16 Eloise Swisher



May 5 Brenda & Craig Jones
 May 6 Connie & Chuck
 Larimer
 May 21 Ted & Sue Hanson
 June 1 Rodger & Linda Ellison
 June 4 Gary & Judy Sanberg
 Jun 7 Dennis & Becky
 Terpening
 June 8 Ben & Jenny Sanberg
 June 11 DeeDee & David Yez
 Jun 12 Neal & Jackie
 Heerwagen
 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 VanKirk
 Jun 26 David & Kathy
 Erlandson
 Jun 26 Gary & Jan Martin
 Jun 30 Chip & Janice Algren
 Jun 30 Warren & Marlys Dobry
 July 2 Jeremy & Wendy
 Anderson
 Jul 8 Tom & Pam Best
 Jul 12 Steve & Karen
 Erlandson

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Emily Agema, Gary Eycler, Cecil Lovdahl, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Hannah Taylor, Carol Hanson, Suzanne Lovdahl

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

Our Vision & Purpose



For 2024

January, WIAR, \$515

February, Kiwanis Club, \$433

March, ELCA World Hunger, \$499

April, Special Olympics

May, Recharge Center

June, St. Jude Run (Wendy Anderson)

July

August, LWR School Kits

September

October

November

December

Vision and Purpose Giving

During May, our Vision and Purpose Giving will go to support the Teen Recharge Center here in Monmouth.

The RECHARGE Teen Center is a safe place for local teens to go after school to hang out with their peers, work on homework, and participate in fun programs and events.

Thanks to our amazing community partners, the RECHARGE Teen Center is able to offer a variety of activities such as gardening, art, cooking, mental health practices, and more!

Throughout the school year, the Recharge center is available after school to 6 PM. Throughout the summer, the center opens at noon and closes again at 6 PM.

Thank you for supporting this vital ministry in Monmouth.

Weekly Devotional



“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.” Jesus speaking in John 15:9

“Jesus loves me, this I know—for the Bible tells me so.” This opening line to a classic hymn is today’s earworm. You will be thinking of this hymn the rest of today, if not the rest of this week. For those in worship on Sunday, we sang this entire hymn as the closing hymn. The original poem that would become this classic hymn was written in 1860 to comfort a dying child. And really, as you read the words of the entire poem, you find out just how sad the hymn actually is. You can find the original 4 stanza poem with a simple web-search. But as sad as it is for you sense the depth of pain being felt by the family losing a child, this is also a major uplifting, and very assuring hymn.

“Jesus loves me” is a hymn of great assurance. Nothing we are enduring will separate us from the love of Jesus, not even the depth of pain of dying at a young age, or being the ones who are losing such a young one. Paul will write in his letter to the Romans that indeed nothing in all of creation separates us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. So the woman who wrote this poem, Anna Warner, drew from Paul’s assuring words and what Jesus says here in John’s gospel. You are loved by Jesus and there is nothing else that can stop that.

If we wanted to, we could close our faith right here. But the love of Jesus doesn’t end with the simple assurance. The love of Jesus prods us into sharing this love with others. Jesus will go on to say that those who love Jesus will obey his commandments, which is summarized in the words love others as you are loved by Jesus. Yes, this important reminder that “Jesus loves me” is the assurance we need when we are dealing with pains that words cannot fully express. But also, “Jesus loves me” is the assurance that we can take the next step and share that love with others.

Who are the others? Well, perhaps it is an annoying neighbor. Perhaps it is someone who hurt us with words or actions and we just cannot stand being in that person’s presence. Perhaps “others” include neighbors we will never meet, neighbors around the world for whom love for neighbor means advocating for justice or providing for daily bread or any number of other aspects of ministry that Jesus’s love prods us toward.

“Jesus loves me” is a hymn that we will always fills us with joy when we sing it, for it is an assurance that God’s promises in Jesus can never be broken. But perhaps we will also hear it now as the song that leads us into loving our neighbor as we were first loved.

Peace, Pastor Jamie