



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 :: May 4, 2026

Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher

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Cell (630)200-3550

Musicians: Janice Algren

Carolyn Kellert

Preschool and Day Care Director

Bobbi Nees

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Congregation Council

President: Pam Van Kirk

Vice President: Chip Algren

Secretary: Pam Best

Adam Sanberg

Kurt Volz

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

Well, we certainly had the April showers, now it is time for the May flowers to come, and you know what May flowers bring? That's right ... Pilgrims! Okay, a little fun dad joke to get us started this week. I had a wonderful dad moment last week. I hope you got to see the post I shared on our church Facebook page. I shared the video of the Cornell College concert band playing a new piece of music that was written by my son, Nate. Nate is completing his fourth year at Cornell, and while he is not graduating at this time, he will be taking some time off from college. But this moment last Monday night is a highlight we will certainly never forget. The video is still on our Facebook page and my personal YouTube channel if you haven't had a chance to see it. It is quite impressive what Nate did.

The month of May brings for our church a Season of Creation. As our fields are being planted with this year's crops, we are diving into our relationship with God the Creator and the creation around us. Check out our Bible study on Wednesday mornings beginning this week. And listen in worship for how Creation cries out in pain for the ways we have harmed it, and also for how Creation looks to our partnership with God in restoring the planet. Our home is the only home we have, and we want to make sure that it is sustainable for generations to come.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM Worship

Sunday School

May 10 & 24

9:45 AM

**Wednesday Bible Study returns
in May**

A Season of Creation—Worship Themes and Bible Study

Throughout May, we will enter a season of creation. In worship, we will use resources developed by the Northern Illinois Synod Creation Cares Committee. These resources include liturgy elements written for worship, and selected readings themed around "Forest Sunday", "Land/Prairie Sunday", "Wilderness Sunday", and "River/Stream Sunday."

Along with our worship themes, we will also have a weekly Bible study on Wednesday mornings at 10 AM in the pastor's study that will explore the scriptures view on God as Creator. We will talk about our tenet of God is Creator; we will talk about our calling by God to be co-creators in this world; we will explore ways that creation has always cried out in pain from human sin, not just in our modern era; and finally we will talk about the restoration of creation that is promised by God and that we can bring about today.

Adult Leaders needed for our Scouting Program

The Scout Troop and Pack that our church charters is looking for a new “charter organization representative.” This person helps connect the troop and pack to the church, represents the church when leaders are being approved, and can attend troop activities as he or she chooses. A charter organization representative must register as an adult leader with the unit and participate in youth protection training as required by Scouting America. If you are interested in assisting the troop, please contact Pastor Jamie

Additional adult leaders are needed for serving the committee as treasurer and committee chairman. We have a couple parents who have held these roles for years and are planning to step back in the coming months. Any adult leader must register with the unit and participate in youth protection training as required by Scouting America.

For more information on how you can help our troop and pack, contact Pastor Jamie.

Updated Security System for Day Care/ Office Entrance coming soon

If you come to the church during the week, you know we have a camera/buzzer system for letting visitors in. This comes with a key card as well. Over the last few months our current system has not been working properly and we have been evaluating new options. In the coming weeks a new system will be installed. If you have a current key card, we will be able to transfer that key card to work with the new system. More information will come about installation dates soon.

Strawberry Festival

Our annual Strawberry Festival is coming on Thursday, June 11th. Please mark your calendars to join us that evening. The Monmouth Municipal Band will perform in our sanctuary at 6 PM.

Vision and Purpose

Do you have a connection with the Teen Recharge Center here in Monmouth? Are you passionate about the Lutheran World Relief kits (school and health)? Talk with Pam Van Kirk or Pastor Jamie about how your vested connection can help bring greater awareness to those causes as we support them with our vision and purpose giving in upcoming months.

Summer Bible Reading Challenge

During the months of June, July, and August, we will embark on a reading challenge. Over the course of 14 weeks, we will read through the entire Gospel of Matthew. Our current lectionary cycle centers on Matthew, so this summer we will get to read all of Matthew, not just the parts that are read aloud during worship.

Each week will have readings from two chapters of Matthew. The series will feature an introduction/overview of the week; a deep dive into each of the two chapters; a video to read along with Pastor Jamie; and a devotional recap. That is 5 different ways to engage the readings throughout the week.

The reading challenge will be posted on our website and our Facebook page. As you join in through the summer, you are encouraged to share with friends, comment on the Facebook posts throughout each week to share your encounter with God’s Word, and discover what the Gospel of Matthew offers for you today.

Mother’s Day

Join us as we celebrate Mother’s Day on Sunday, May 10th. All women attending will receive a small gift of appreciation.

Worship

Easter

April 5 to May 24

The season of Easter continues, even as our worship focus turns to a season of Creation. The primary theme of Easter is resurrection, restoration, renewal. And while some think that points us only to the afterlife, the main message of Easter is that Jesus is still here with us today and this resurrection and restoration and renewal is a today experience.

So inserting our Season of Creation into the remaining weeks of Easter makes wonderful sense as it will help us think about our calling from Jesus to help bring about resurrection, restoration, and renewal today in forests, prairies, wilderness spaces, and rivers/streams.

Worship Guild Members

May 10 — Easter Sunday 6

Usher: Chip Algren
Reader: Kurt Volz
Com Asst: David Sandstrom
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

May 17 — Easter Sunday 7

Usher: Doug Cruce
Reader: Julie Blaesing
Com Asst: Chip Algren
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

May 24 — Pentecost Sunday

Usher: Ray Golden
Reader: Doug Cruce
Com Asst: Mark Shrader
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

May 31 — Trinity Sunday

Usher: Diane Carlson
Reader: Julie Blaesing
Com Asst: Gary Sanberg
Narthex Host: Linda McGuire
Musician: Carolyn Kellert



Are You Interested in Serving in Worship?

At this time, our list of worship helpers includes:

11 lectors; 12 communion assistants, 12 ushers

Which means a person volunteering helps out about 1 time every 12 weeks or so. Though, some of the folks on this list are on two or even three of these lists. So, often a person is helping in worship more like 2 or 3 times every 12 weeks.

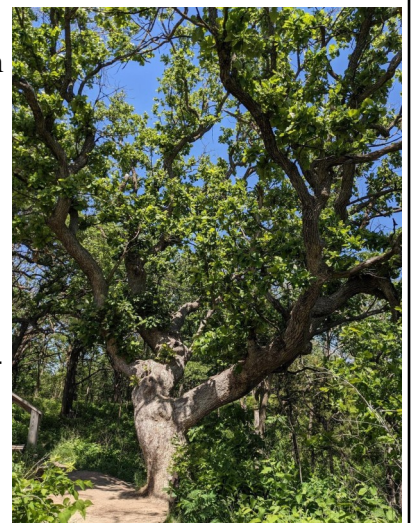
Perhaps you have an interest and would like to help as an usher, or assisting in communion, or reading the scripture passages and prayers of intercession?

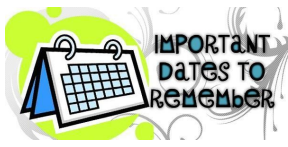
Let Pastor Jamie know you are interested in helping out in worship and get your name added into the rotating list of those who help bring our worship services to life.

This is the oldest tree in the state of Nebraska. An oak tree that was a sapling in the year 1644.

Imagine the history this tree has witness. Near the Missouri River in Ponca State Park, this tree has witnessed indigenous tribes, the exploration of Lewis and Clark, the westward expansion of the United States. As

you reflect on Forest Sunday themes from worship, what does this tree represent for you?





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



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, May 3rd—Easter 5th Sunday
 Wed, May 6—10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, May 10th –Easter 6th Sunday
 Sun, May 10 Happy Mother’s Day
 9:45 AM Sunday School
 Wed, May 13—10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, May 17th — Easter 7th Sunday
 Tue, May 19th—6 PM rescheduled Council meeting
 Wed, May 20th—10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, May 24th—Pentecost Sunday
 Mon, May 25—Memorial Day, Office Closed
 Wed, May 27 — 10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, May 31st—Trinity Sunday
 Mon, Jun 1—7 PM Building/Grounds Committee

Sunday, June 7th – Season after Pentecost
 Tues, Jun 9—6 PM Council Meeting
 Thurs, Jun 11—5—7 PM Strawberry Festival
 6 PM Municipal Band Performs
 Fri, Jun 12 to Sat, Jun 13—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 18 Todd Champion
- May 19 Carl Hamberg
- 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 Tammy Slater
- Jun 2 Alexia Golden
- Jun 2 Jarrod Hippens
- Jun 2 Susie Jurgens
- Jun 6 Rose Youngquist
- Jun 11 Wendy Anderson
- Jun 21 Aaron Jensen
- Jun 22 Denise Mann
- Jun 30 Collin Nuckles
- Jul 3 Trudy Bergren
- Jul 3 Hal Tate
- Jul 4 Jennifer Sprecher
- Jul 9 Cohen Anderson
- Jul 9 Kris Champion
- Jul 13 Reese Anderson



- May 5 Craig & Brenda Jones
- May 6 Chuck & Connie Larimer
- May 21 Ted & Sue Hanson
- Jun 4 Gary & Judy Sanberg
- Jun 7 Angela & Kathleen Bradley Volz
- 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
- Jun 23 Mike & Susie Jurgens
- Jun 23 John & Pam VanKirk
- Jun 26 Dave & Kathy Erlandson
- Jun 26 Gary & Jan Martin
- Jun 30 Chip & Janice Algren
- Jun 30 Warren & Marlyn Dobry

Prayer Requests

Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Janet Lowe, Pat Clark, Jennie Best, Dee Dee Yez, Charlotte Volz, Richard Schlicher, Eloise Swisher, Cecil Lovdahl

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

In May, we are supporting the Teen Recharge Center here in Monmouth.

At Recharge, we are committed to helping teens discover their individual strengths & passions, while creating a safe, judgment free environment for them to acquire skills, resources & opportunities within their community.

Thank you for all the ways you support our Vision and Purpose Giving throughout the year.

January, Mosaic == \$140

February, Lutheran Disaster Response ==\$252

March, ELCA World Hunger == \$900.00

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, Strom Center

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School

December, Jamieson Center



For God so loved the world ... — John 3:16

Within Christianity, there is a lot of focus put on our personal relationship with God through Jesus. We ask Jesus into our heart. We talk about the moment we first believed in Jesus. We talk about personal salvation hinging on our turning away from sin and living the right moral life. We even intertwine our faith and our politics, and wrap our faith around political causes that are near and dear to our heart. But while we center our faith around a personal relationship with God, God has an entirely different perspective. God is not as interested in the one-on-one relationship that we have made faith to be. God’s perspective beings here: “For God so loved the world,” John the gospel writer begins the most famous verse in the whole Bible.

The word we translate as “world” is the Greek word “cosmos”. For God so loved the entirety of all creation, is really what this expression says. God loves the planet earth and all its inhabitants. God loves the little worms, the jelly fish, the massive whales of the oceans. God loves the squirrels and mosquitos and bees and butterflies. And yes, God loves you and your neighbor, and the people on the other side of the political aisle, and those folks who have a different religion all together. God loves moms and dads, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, grandchildren, orphans and widows. God loves people of every shape and size. God loves straight and gay, cis-identifying and trans-identifying. The entire cosmos. All of it. If you can see it, touch it, smell it, hear it, taste it — if our scientists can discover it, explore it, wonder at the mystery of it — it is part of the cosmos that God loves.

This perspective of God’s love for the whole cosmos shifts our thinking about what do I have to do that God will save just me to a perspective of how do I live within this cosmos that God loves so very much. Our faith perspective is less individualized and more universal, paired with the salvation of everything within all of the cosmos. This changes us from thinking “Because I am saved, I don’t have to worry about you” to “You are saved, I am saved, let’s live in God’s kingdom together.” For God so loved the world, John says. At no point in time does the Word of God ever say God only loves a piece of the world, one slice of the population, only if absolute correct belief takes place, or even if right action happens. God’s love doesn’t hinge on us. God’s love is simply that—God’s love, for the whole cosmos, you included.

Peace, Pastor Jamie