



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 :: September 20, 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,

I want to draw attention to the date and time change for our Bible study that is highlighted in the box below. We are working in collaboration with our neighbors at Faith United Presbyterian and First United Methodist Churches to bring this Bible study to the larger community. And so we are providing two opportunities, one in the evening, and one in the mornings, to hopefully get as many participants as possible. So, Tuesday mornings at 11 AM the study will be at Faith United Presbyterian Church (200 S. 8th Street, Monmouth). And, Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM the study will be here in our own fellowship hall. Pastors Brandon Oellette, Shelly Forrest, and John Huxtable, and I are all partnering to lead this study. There will be 6 sessions ... dates listed below. And the topics are from the book mentioned.

This study will explore some common Biblical themes that have popular interpretations, but those popular interpretations may not be so rooted in scripture as one things. So we will be asking a lot about what the Bible says, what theologians through the centuries have said, how the past cultural influences shaped what was written and how modern cultural influences shape our interpretations. This will be a good study, with great questions, and opportunity to discover a God who is much larger than any Biblical interpretation we cling to.

Also, take a moment to look at an announcement on our next page. Trace is working towards her Eagle Rank for scouting, and will be leading a project to help renew the playground for our day care. Your help as a volunteer will be greatly appreciated.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM

Worship

Sunday School

Sept 27

Oct 4, 11, 18, 25

9:45 AM

The Bible Says So

Come dive into topics and explore what we think the Bible says versus what the Bible actually says. We will use the book "The Bible Says So: What We Get Right (and Wrong) About Scripture's Most Controversial Issues" by Dan McClellan as our guide for this study.

Tuesday mornings at 11 AM on Oct 6, 13, 20, 27 and Nov 3 and 10
at Faith United Presybyterian Church

Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM on Oct 8, 15, 22 and Nov 5, 12, 19
at First Lutheran Church

WELCA Southwest Conference Fall Assembly

The Southwest Conference WELCA groups are meeting together on Saturday, October 10th at MESSIAH Lutheran Church, Aledo (509 NE Second Street)

Registration and breakfast begin at 8:30 AM Program begins at 9:45 AM with Deborah McGrath from the Mercy County Women for Women.

Offerings support both NIS WELCA and Mercer County Women for Women. In-Kind Gifts will support the Churches of Mercer County Food Pantry

Reservations are due by Tuesday, October 6.
Contact Messiah Lutheran at 309-582-5261 or messiahlutheranaledo@gmail.com

Halloween Fun Night

We are already planning our next Halloween Fun Night. This year, we will hold the event on Thursday, October 29th from 6 PM to 7 PM in the fellowship hall.

Donations of candy will be accepted beginning October 1st. Bring your donations to the church office or to worship on Sunday. Volunteers needed for helping check guests in as they arrive and hand out the goodie bag. More information on volunteers needed will be coming.

Our Halloween Fun Night is a great way to invite the community to our church to experience Halloween safely and comfortably. This happens in partnership with the preschool/day care staff and with volunteers from the Scout troop and MRHS Music Department.



RANK

Eagle Scout

Eagle Project Saturday, October 3 9:00 AM

Trace Gallagher invites you to assist with her Eagle Scout Project. The project is designed to help the Day Care and Preschool upgrade its playground.

The project on October 3 will focus on removing old playground equipment, dismantling the old barn shed, weeding, cleaning the fence line, and sweeping along the fence line all the pea gravel that has escaped.

The day care will install new pieces of equipment and then a second day for this project will include spreading gravel, placing additional new playground items, and painting an interactive mural on the asphalt.

Trace especially needs volunteers with pick-up trucks to help haul the waste to the transfer station, and arrangements are being made so we can take that on that Saturday.

Trace also would appreciate volunteers donating cookies or other snacks to have available for the volunteers that day. Trace will be recruiting other scouts, family members, and classmates from school to assist with this project. Trace has been working with our Day Care Director Ms Bobbi Nees in arranging for this project.

If you are able to assist on October 3rd, provide a pick-up truck, or donate items like snacks or work gloves, goggles or tools for removing the old equipment, or weeding, please contact Trace by texting her at 309-536-3423.

Prime Beef Festival Recap

After income and expenses are considered, our Prime Beef Drive Thru profited our congregation with \$1567.54. Thank you again for all your donations and volunteering.



The Season After Pentecost May 31 to November 22

The colors of our world are going to begin changing soon, from greens to reds, yellows, oranges, and browns. Crops planted in the Spring will soon begin being harvested, and our landscapes will change. The world is preparing for the slumber of winter. In worship, we are preparing ourselves, too. We are preparing ourselves for the Kingdom of God, birthed into the world in Christ, experienced in the world through the love of God expressed by all disciples of Jesus. And worship prepares us for this, and gives us a chance to praise God for being our steady in an ever changing world. The seasons come and go, but God remains the same - forgiving, compassionate, merciful, and leading us to do the works of Christ.

Join us in worship, no matter what changes happen around you, for here we praise God.

Save the Date

Sunday, November 1st, 2026

we will celebrate members who are 85 years old or older during our All Saints Worship service at 10 AM that morning. We also have children who will be preparing to receive their first communion on All Saints Sunday. So this will be a very important Sunday for our congregation.

We will also have a congregation luncheon following worship that morning.

Details about the lunch will be coming soon.

Worship Guild Members

September 27-- Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: Mark Shrader
Reader: Pam Best
Communion: Diane Carlson
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

October 4 -- Sunday After Pentecost

Usher: Steve Erlandson
Reader: Chip Algren
Communion: Robin Johnson
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

October 11 - Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: David Sandstrom
Reader: Maddie Blaesing
Communion: Steve Erlandson
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

October 18 - Season After Pentecost

Usher: Chip Algren
Reader: Doug Cruce
Communion: Adam Sanberg
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Carolyn Kellert

*Changes from original publishing due to schedule changes

What is an Eagle Project?

You saw the invite to help Trace with her Eagle project but what does that mean? Scouts wishing to earn the highest rank of scouting must plan and lead a project that benefits a community organization, such as our day care. Eagle Scout candidates plan, prepare for, lead volunteers, and fill out paperwork demonstrating their plan, their event, and what they learned about themselves. This trains the scout how to lead a big project, something which carries great implications for all of life.

Not every scout achieves the rank of Eagle. So when a scout is leading a project, this is pretty amazing. And once Trace completes all her Eagle requirements, which this is the biggest part of what is left for her, you will be invited to the celebration when she is awarded her Eagle Rank.



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

Sunday, September 20th - Season After Pentecost

Sunday, September 27th - Season After Pentecost

Sun, Sept 27 -- 9:45 AM Sunday School

Mon, Sept 28 to Wed, Sept 30 -- Pastor Attends
Northern Illinois Synod Professional
Leaders Conference

Sat, Oct 3 - 9 AM -- Eagle Project for Day Care
Playground

Sunday, October 4th - Season After Pentecost

Sun, Oct 4 - 9:45 AM Sunday school

Mon, Oct 5 - 7 PM Building and Grounds meeting

Tues, Oct 6 - 11 AM Bible Study at Faith UP

Thur, Oct 8 - 6:30 PM Bible study - fellowship
hall

Sunday, October 11th - Season After Pentecost

Sun, Oct 11 - 9:45 AM Sunday school

Tues, Oct 13 - 11 AM Bible study at Faith UP
6 PM Church Council meeting

Thurs, Oct 15 - 6:30 PM Bible study in
Fellowship Hall

Friday, Oct 16 - Seve Homecoming Dinner for
MRHS Marching Band

Sunday, October 18th - Season after Pentecost

Sun, Oct 18 - 9:45 AM Sunday school

Tues, Oct 20 - 11 AM Bible Study at Faith UP

Thurs, Oct 22 - 6:30 PM Bible Study in
Fellowship Hall

Sunday, October 25th - Reformation Sunday

Sun, Oct 25 - 9:45 AM Sunday School

Tues, Oct 27 - 11 AM Bible Study at Faith UP

Wed, Oct 28 - 5 PM Set Up Night for Halloween

Thurs, Oct 29 - 6 PM Halloween Fun Night



Sep 23 Dennis Mann

Sep 24 Manohie Alcin

Sep 25 Lacey Elliott

Sep 28 Maddie Blaesing

Oct 7 Margaret Hackspacher

Oct 10 John Van Kirk

Oct 11 Julie Blaesing

Oct 16 Ayla Johnston

Oct 18 Loretta Reynolds

Oct 21 Betty Bruyn

Oct 26 Paula Buban

Oct 28 Jackie Heerwagen

Nov 9 Ted Hanson

Nov 19 Jan Martin

Nov 23 Jenny Sanberg

Nov 26 Brady Sanberg

Nov 28 Ray Golden

Nov 29 Brenda Jones

Nov 30 Glenna Martin

Nov 30 Judy Sanberg

Dec 2 Linda McGuire

Dec 13 Kathy Erlandson

Dec 13 Ben Sanberg

Dec 16 Michael Pearson

Dec 17 Caleb Sanberg

Dec 17 Jackie Slater

Dec 18 Adam Sanberg

Dec 23 Derek Johnston

Dec 26 Janice Algren

Dec 28 Emma Nuckles

Dec 30 Gary Sanberg

*For corrections and
updates, please call the
Church office.*



Feb 22 Kenny & Nancy Reynolds

Mar 14 Jim & Tammy Slater

Apr 2 Don & Kathy Fillman

Apr 28 Ron & Deb Manuel

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

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

Jun 30 Warren & Marlys Dobry

Jul 2 Jeremy & Wendy Anderson

Jul 8 Tom & Pam Best

Jul 12 Steve & Karen Erlandson

Jul 24 Michael & Julie Blaesing

Aug 4 Ray & Shelly Golden

Aug 28 Hal & Kathy Tate

Sept 2 Dennis & Denise Mann

Oct 11 Jamie & Katie Gallagher

Oct 15 Ken & Theresa Miller

Oct 25 Mark & Ellen Shrader

Prayer Requests

Janet Lowe, Pat Clark, Dee Dee Yez, Richard Schlicher,
Donna Winbigler, John Van Kirk

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

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

The Council made a switch for our September Vision and Purpose. We will be supporting the Strom Center in September. Strom Center helps seniors and individuals with disabilities in Warren County with a variety of short-term and long-term programs. Strom Center relies on donations to help ensure its programs remain sustainable for all who need.

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

Jan, Mosaic == \$140

Feb, Lutheran Disaster Response == \$252

Mar, ELCA World Hunger == \$900

Apr, Special Olympics == \$550

May, Recharge Center == \$380

June, St. Jude Run (Wendy Anderson) == \$625

July, LWR school and health kits == \$372

Aug, Kiwanis Club == \$280

Sept, Strom Center

Oct,

Nov, Lutheran Day Care & Preschool

Dec, Jamieson Center



Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; ... And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city ... ?" Jonah 4:10-11

The book of Jonah is an opportunity to explore God's mercy for people we do not want God's mercy to be extended to. Nineveh was an enemy to Jonah and his people. When God called Jonah to go and preach to the Ninevites the message that their destruction was near, Jonah figured God was up to something. Jonah knows God is a merciful God and would do anything to not destroy Nineveh, so Jonah tried to force God's hand by refusing to go to Nineveh. Well, three days in the belly of a great sea monster did change Jonah's mind, and off to Nineveh he went. But barely entering the city, barely proclaiming the word, to fulfill the barest minimum of these job requirements still got Jonah to a place of great dismay. The city heard what he said, they repented for their wrong ways, and God forgave Nineveh and would not destroy the city.

While pouting on a hill overlooking the city, Jonah wanted to die. But God caused a big bush to grow up over Jonah. This bush gave Jonah shelter and comfort, and Jonah became comfortable sitting under the tree staring at the city of Nineveh with disgust that they had been forgiven and weren't going to be destroyed. Then the God took the bush away. This made Jonah even more mad. To the point Jonah was more mad the bush went away than he was mad the city of Nineveh wasn't getting destroyed.

This points out that often times we distract ourselves with so much stuff that is meaningless, that we forget what is meaningful. We forget that God is not exclusively our God. We forget the Kingdom of God is not solely ours. We forget God is for everyone, and that even includes the people we don't like. And it doesn't matter why we don't like another group of people -- be they our enemy, be they immigrants, be they with different skin color or different religion or different love interests that we wish they had. God is the God for everyone. And we can choose to be mad about that, as Jonah was. We could choose to be mad at things that don't matter, like Jonah was, or we can embrace the Kingdom of God and its benefits for everyone, as God desires. Somedays, it really gets to be that simple. Don't be a Jonah pouting about who God forgives, loves, and includes in the Kingdom.

Peace,
Pastor Jamie