



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 :: October 27, 2025

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Congregation Council

President: Pam Van Kirk

Vice President: Chip Algren

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Pam Best

Brian Elliott

Adam Sanberg

Kurt Volz

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

Today, we extend our congratulations to Troy and Lydia Kehoe who were married in a wonderful ceremony in Chicago on Friday. Lydia is the daughter of Neal and Jackie Heerwagen. We lift prayers of blessing for the new couple as they begin their new journey of married life together.

We also extend prayers of comfort and condolence to the family and friends of Dan Golden. Dan is the brother of Ray Golden. Dan passed away on Saturday after a long illness. We lift prayers of peace and sympathy during this time of grief for the whole Golden family.

This week, our congregation hosts our annual Halloween Fun Night — a community gathering event bringing together families for fun to live out the word “Joy” from our Mission Statement. It is always a joy to see all the costumes and to hear the laughter as games are played, crafts are made, and snacks are enjoyed. This year we even have an added Bluetooth speaker animatronic skeleton DJ who will be playing Halloween themed music for the kids to dance with. It will be a truly great night.

Next week Sunday, on All Saints Day, we will have a soup luncheon hosted by the congregation council immediately following worship. Please plan on joining us for this lunch as we celebrate just being the family of God at First Lutheran. We will live out the words “Gratitude” and “Joy” from our Mission Statement as we are thankful for being a part of this community, and filled with joy by spending time with each other.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM Worship

Bible Study Opportunities

Tuesdays, beginning Oct 7

at 10 AM: BYOB&B

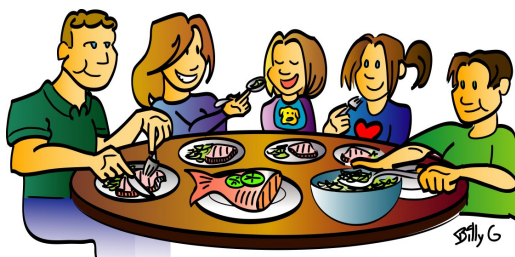
Wednesdays, beginning Sept 24,

**at 10 AM: The Chosen Watch
Party**

All Saints Luncheon

Join us after worship on Sunday, November 2nd for soup luncheon hosted by our congregation council.

This luncheon is for the entire congregation. This is just an opportunity to have lunch together and foster our family dynamic. Invite your family and friends to join us that Sunday to also stay with us for the luncheon.



On Going Bible Studies

Tuesdays at 10 AM: BYOB&B

Bring your own Bible and beverage

Thinking Faithfully Out Loud

A Bible study with Faith Presbyterian and First United Methodist Churches, hosted here at First Lutheran

Wednesdays at 10 AM: The Chosen Watch Party

Join us as we continue to watch season 5 of the tv series “The Chosen”, a dramatic retelling of the Gospel stories which leads to greater understanding of scripture

NIS World Hunger Celebration

The Northern Illinois Synod has completed a wonderful giving challenge raising from donations and matching donations over a quarter million dollars for ELCA World Hunger since March 16th.

Join the synod on Sunday, November 2nd at 4 PM at Faith Lutheran Church, Rochelle, for a celebration worship and sandwich and cake reception.

Bishop Stacie Fidlar is preaching. Pastor Jamie is a worship leader. RSVP to Pastor Jamie and to coordinate shared rides to Rochelle that day.

Monmouth Roseville High School

Madrigals

Join us for worship on Sunday, November 30th as we begin our Advent season with the gift of music.

The Monmouth Roseville High School Madrigals will join us during worship to perform. This is an opportunity for them to thank us for all the ways we support the music program, and a way for us to raise funds for their program. A collection basket will be set out for contributions to support the high school music department activities.

The ELCA, a Primer

In the previous column, I shared briefly how our ancestral Lutheran heritage united us with other Lutherans and how mergers throughout the 20th Century led to the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the ELCA).

One item which united Lutherans through the 70s and 80s was the advent of a new worship resource, the Lutheran Book of Worship, sometimes abbreviated as LBW, or simply referred to as the Green Book.

As you can imagine, worship across multiple cultures and from many national backgrounds varied across the multiple Lutheran church bodies that spread across the US throughout the 1800s and 1900s. So finding a common way to share worship was important as the discussions to unite began.

The pattern of worship was fairly common, but specific tunes for worship elements like the Kyrie or the Hymn of Praise and more were all different. Eventually, 3 settings of worship were agreed to, and these had variations for when communion was celebrated and when communion was not celebrated. See back in the days, the many Lutheran bodies even celebrated communion differently, as frequency (1 time a month, 2 times a month, every week) were all different and everyone had their “don’t mess with our way” attitude flowing. So the new worship resource had to accommodate not only elements that unified, but also be flexible for elements that still varied by local custom. But in 1978 the Green Book was published, a full decade ahead of the ELCA being formed, and Lutherans could begin going to other Lutheran churches—LCA, ALC, and depending on local custom Missouri Synod — and know what worship was going to be like.

We still have a strong local custom tradition within our worship today. So how one church does worship will vary slightly from another church. But the basics are still the same, and we will feel comfortable in any ELCA congregation recognizing the worship service.

Worship isn’t the only thing that united Lutherans, but it was one of the primary connections across pews and sanctuaries that helped through the merger.



Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

This Sunday is All Saint's Sunday. This is a day when we remember our dead from the previous year. To have a mid-autumn moment to remember the dead is a cultural phenomenon that crosses religious lines. Historical peoples from many places have had various rituals around this kind of remembrance located in the mid autumn season. As Christians, we use this day to remember these dead as they are now at home with Jesus in heaven. It is our ritual way of honoring our grief and raising our hope in the life that is to come.

This past year, we have had two saints of the congregation who have died and entered eternal life. We will remember Melba Matson and Don Reynolds, both long time members who had become homebound in their final years, but who remained connected to the congregation through family and friends.

For all who have experienced grief this year, mourning a loved one, this Sunday will be a moment to let God remind you once again, you do not grieve alone, and you do not grieve without hope.

Worship Guild Members

November 2 — All Saints Sunday

Usher:	Kurt Volz
Reader:	Julie Blaesing
Com Asst:	Robin Johnson
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

November 9 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Adam Sanberg
Reader:	Trace Gallagher
Com Asst:	Doug Cruce
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

November 16 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Pam Best
Reader:	Steve Erlandson
Com Asst:	Adam Sanberg
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

November 23 — Christ the King Sunday

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



Northern Illinois Synod Diakonia Retreat

You are invited to join the Northern Illinois Synod diakonia Steering Committee for this year's diakonia retreat. Held at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (1834 S IL Route 2 Oregon, IL) on November 8th from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm.

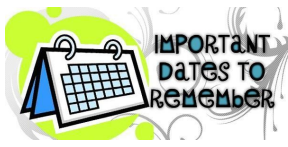
Life can feel overwhelming at times with the many things vying for our attention: work obligations, family life, news highlighting the brokenness of the world. In this day-long retreat, we will introduce spiritual practices that are aimed at helping you reconnect to the divine when you can find rest and renewal. These spiritual practices are also ones that you can introduce to your own faith communities. Join us for a day of renewal and reconnection. **This retreat is open to everyone.**

For more info or to register, go to www.nisynod.org

Decorating for Advent/Christmas

Join us on Sunday, November 23rd as we decorate our worship space for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Advent begins on November 30th, and we will have our worship space all ready to go for the season.

It is a joy to see the decorations go up and fill our worship space.



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, October 26th—Reformation Sunday

Mon, Oct 27 5 PM Halloween Fun Night SetUp

Tues, Oct 28 10 AM BYOB&B study

6 PM Halloween Fun Night

Wed, Oct 29 9:30 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sunday, November 2nd—All Saints Sunday

Sun, Nov 2 11 AM All Saints Soup Luncheon

4 PM Synod Hunger Challenge

Celebration Worship

Faith, Rochelle

Mon, Nov 3 7 PM Building/Grounds Meeting

Tues, Nov 4 10 AM BYOB&B Study

Wed, Nov 5 9:30 AM The Chosen Watch Party

(final two episodes)

Sunday, November 9th — Ordinary Time

Tues, Nov 11 10 AM BYOB&B Study

6 PM Council meeting

Sunday, November 16th — Ordinary Time

Mon, Nov 17th 6:30 PM Pathways meeting



Oct 28 Jackie Heerwagen

Oct 30 Bryan Osborn

Nov 9 Ted Hanson

Nov 14 Theodore Coombes

Nov 15 Troy Hippen

Nov 19 Jan Martin

Nov 20 Lewis Sanberg

Nov 22 Delmar Champion

Nov 23 Jenny Sanberg

Nov 26 Brady Sanberg

Nov 28 Ray Golden

Nov 29 Brenda Jones

Nov 30 Glenna Martin

Dec 1 Evelyn Sprecher

Dec 1 Lewis Sprecher

Dec 2 Linda McGuire

Dec 5 Carol Hanson

Dec 10 Kevin Sprecher

Dec 13 Kathy Erlandson

Dec 13 Ben Sanberg

Dec 16 Michael Pearson

Dec 17 Caleb Sanberg

Dec 17 Jackie Slater

Dec 18 Tyler Osborn

Dec 18 Adam Sanberg



Oct 25 Mark & Ellen Shrader

Feb 22 Kenny & Nancy

Reynolds

Mar 1 Phil & Trudy Bergren

Mar 11 Cecil & Kay Lovdahl

Mar 14 Jim & Tammy Slater

Apr 2 Don & Kathy Fillman

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 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

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

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Emily Agema, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Wes Lovdahl, Doug Moulden, Marlene Moulden, Teresa Eyler

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

In October, we are supporting Mosaic. Mosaic is a Lutheran rooted ministry helping adults with intellectual disabilities. Their closest office to us is in Macomb. Mosaic assists their clients with life-skills training, independent life opportunities, in-home services, and more.

A big part of their ability to support these adults happens because of donations from individuals and congregations, like ours. See the article on page 2 for more information about a fundraiser they are hosting in October.

Thank you for supporting this months Vision/Purpose.

January, Strom Center == \$250.00

February, Lutheran Disaster Response == \$515.00

March, ELCA World Hunger == \$2,609.00

April, Special Olympics == \$410.00

May, Recharge Center == \$407.00

June, St. Jude Run (Wendy Anderson) == \$772.00

July, LWR School Kits == \$270.00

August, Kiwanis Club == \$460.00

September, Out of Darkness Walk == \$412.00

October, Mosaic,

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace, as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement, by his blood, effective through faith.. —
Romans 3:23-25

Reformation Sunday was this last weekend, and it provides us an opportunity to think about what connects us to God. For Martin Luther, he was greatly disturbed by the church of his era telling people they could only be right with God if they bought indulgences—pieces of paper that said a certain number of sins were forgiven based on the size of your contribution to the church. Not only was this not the way the Bible tells us we are right with God, Luther also saw this for what it was—a cheap fundraiser so the pope could build a new basilica, the fancy church known as St. Peter's in the Vatican City, which still stands today. Luther read what St. Paul wrote to the Romans, he read what the Old Testament prophets wrote, he was convinced by scripture that what makes us right with God was faith—not the size of our contribution, not the number of papers we bought from the priest, none of it. Only our faith in Christ Jesus dying and rising made us right with God.

Luther's ascertain that faith makes us right with God is as important today as it was 500 years ago. For today, we still have different ways of understanding what makes us right with God. For some Christians, it is about the proper participation in sacraments. For some Christians, it is about saying a certain prayer and being baptized when you make a decision to follow Jesus. For some Christians, it is about having the correct order of beliefs. For some Christians it is even about having the right nationality or skin color or language or Bible translation. Yeah, we people like to put a lot of conditions on what it takes to be right with God. But the simplicity of what St. Paul wrote, the simplicity of Luther's teaching, is really at the heart of it all it takes for us to be right with God — faith in Christ Jesus.

Faith in Christ Jesus looks like this—believing that Jesus died and our sins are forgiven. This belief then becomes our way of living following the example of how Jesus lived his life, but knowing that when we mess up, God isn't condemning us, God is forgiving us and setting us right back on the path again, so we can follow Jesus' example again. It is amazing how complicated we as people want to make this. It is amazing how simple it really is.

As you contemplate your relationship with God, and wonder if you are right with God, simply ask yourself the basic question, is your faith in Christ Jesus who died for your sins? Then God has indeed given you a right relationship and that relationship with God can never be broken.

Peace, Pastor Jamie