



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 :: July 21, 2025

Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher

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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,

We had a very delightful Family Movie Matinee yesterday. It was so wonderful to see all the families come together. The Day Care and Preschool and the Church provided a truly nice event for everyone. The popcorn was great, and the family movie we watched (Zootopia, by Disney) was a real blast. Hopefully, we can do this kind of event again.

I will say more about Churchwide Assembly later in this newsletter, but as a reminder, I will be away from Monmouth beginning the afternoon of July 27 and I will not be back until very late on Aug 2nd. I do have Pastor Katie Gallagher available for all pastoral care needs. Her cell is 630-200-3288. If you have a question for me that week, the best way to reach me is by email or text. When there are breaks in the meetings, I will have time to respond to messages. I am really looking forward to being part of the Church that week as it meets to discuss a lot of really important business. And I can't wait to share my experiences with you when I am back.

Pastor John Huxtable, the chaplain at Monmouth College, will lead worship on Sunday, August 3rd. That will be a great opportunity to hear from someone else. I also have seminarian, Vicar Madelyn Knutson, leading worship and preaching on Sunday, July 27th. This is a great chance to give her an opportunity to lead worship as she prepares for her upcoming internship at First Lutheran in Geneseo. Vicar Madelyn's husband is Vicar Nathaniel Knutson, who is serving as intern at Grace Lutheran, Knoxville. Please be sure to come on both of these Sundays and provide, especially for Vicar Madelyn, some encouraging feedback as she is developing her worship leadership and preaching skills.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM Worship

**Our next Bible Study will be
announced for the Fall**

Women's Fun Brunch

"Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

Do you find rest and trust in God while tending to the flowers in your yard? Do gardening chores become more difficult as you age, but you still appreciate the peace of being in nature?

At First Lutheran Church, on Saturday, August 9th, 11 am, local horticulturist Martha Smith will share her knowledge about gardening as you age.

A brunch and the program will be in the fellowship hall. The food and program cost \$12.00 per person. Share the fun, fellowship, and food with FLC women and guests. Set aside a moment of peace in our noisy world. For more information, contact Pam Van Kirk.



Southwest Conference Worship

We are a part of the Southwest Conference of the Northern Illinois Synod. This means we are part of a network of 16 congregations stretching from Kewanee to Stronghurst, from Aledo to Knoxville. Over the years our partnership and connections have waned a bit, and we are trying to rebuild these core connections.

Sunday, August 17th, the Southwest Conference will have an outdoor worship and picnic at 4 PM at Lake Storey, Galesburg (shelter 4, by the soccer fields).

This worship will have a creation theme as we hear the lament of wildlife and build our hope on the renewal that is found in Jesus. Worship will also include a pet blessing. Feel free to bring your crowd-friendly pet or a photo of your pet.

A picnic will happen after worship, with dinner provided by one of the churches in our conference. We are asking those who attend to bring cookies or brownies to share as dessert as well as your beverage of choice.

Also, please plan on bringing a folding chair, and to help with reducing single-use products, please bring your own table ware.

Please join us on Sunday, August 17 at 4 PM for this great opportunity to get to know other Lutherans near us, and to celebrate God in creation with them.

Vacation Bible School

This summer, VBS is hosted by First United Methodist Church. The dates are July 27 to 31. For more information, call First United Methodist Church at 309-734-9437.

Pam Best has put the call out for help getting 5 dozen undecorated sugar cookies and 5 dozen chocolate cupcakes with chocolate frosting. These will need to be brought to the Methodist Church by Monday, July 28th 5 PM.

Contact Pam Best for more information and to help coordinate these treats. Her phone is 309.536.0827



ELCA Churchwide Assembly

Want to learn more about the work of the Church, check out all that is happening at Churchwide Assembly by going to www.elca.org/about/leadership/churchwide-assembly.

Here you can find the agenda for the event, resources that cover themes that will be discussed during the assembly, and links to videos and livestreams during the whole week.

ELCA Churchwide Assembly meets every three years to deal with legislative matters, vote on social statements, deal with church budget matters, and elect churchwide officers.

This year, we are electing a new presiding bishop and a new church secretary. For Presiding Bishop, any currently rostered and ordained individual in the church can be nominated and elected. For secretary, any current member of the ELCA (rostered, ordained, or lay-member) can be nominated and elected. Since we use a nominating ballot, early candidates might be pre-identified, but there is no campaigning, so we really do not know who all will be nominated until that first ballot happens.

There is a new social statement addressing Faith and Civic Life that is being addressed. There are several new changes to the church constitution and model constitution for congregations that will be voted on. And a lot of items that synods have requested the churchwide assembly address.

We will hear reports from churchwide ministry units as well as ecumenical partners. And, we will see lots of people we might know. I already knows of at least 2 friends who serve in other synods who are also attending, so catching up with them is on the list of things to do.

It is an honor to be able to attend Churchwide. Usually, I am just sitting at home and watching livestreams or reading news updates as they come available. Now, I get to take part in the action and have fun with the Phoenix outside heat and inside ice-box air conditioning (we have been warned to have a sweater inside, and a t-shirt for outside.)

I, too, will post on FB throughout the week. So watch for those updates.



Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

When we worship, we easily think about our weekly routine—this is just what we do. We are excited about the family, friends, neighbors we will see, and how we can catch up on the latest news from their home. We love our hymns, sometimes even singing them with great passion because on that particular day we are so moved by the Spirit. The readings sometimes catch us off guard, or make us ponder something new, or there is something said in the sermon that rises up our emotions—sometimes good, sometimes not so good. It's a lot of stuff going on in worship.

So much stuff that we can easily overlook why we are here to begin with. Worship is an act of praise of God. Worship really isn't about friends, or family, or routines, or favorite hymns, or rousing sermons. It is about God. It is about taking a moment to say "Hi, God, it's me, I noticed you today, this week, this month, in my life, in the world, and with everything else that tries to distract me from noticing you and paying attention to you, here in this space, now in this moment, I pause everything else to remember that all I do is because of you. Thank you God." That is why we worship.

Prime Beef Drive Thru

Thursday, August 28th is the day we have scheduled for our big drive-thru event.

More information will be available soon.

Welcome Students back to High School with a Donut

On Wednesday, August 20th freshmen begin the school year. On Thursday, August 21st, the rest of the high school resumes classes. Join Pastor Jamie in the parking lot from 7:45 AM to 8:10 AM to help distribute donuts and water bottles to the students to help them start the new year off right.

Worship Guild Members

July 20 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Diane Carlson
Reader:	Ellen Shrader
Com Asst:	Robin Johnson
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

July 27 — Ordinary Time

Guest Preacher:	Vicar Madelyn Knutson
Usher:	Pam Van Kirk
Reader:	Chip Algren
Com Asst:	Adam Sanberg
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

August 3 — Ordinary Time

Guest Worship Leader:	Pastor John Huxtable
Usher:	Kurt Volz
Reader:	Madelyn Blaesing
Com Asst:	Diane Carlson
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

August 10 — Ordinary Time

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

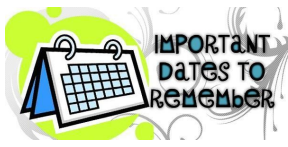


Summer Newsletter Schedule

Summer is well underway, here is a reminder of our upcoming newsletter schedule to keep you in the loop of all that is happening around First Lutheran this season:

Aug 4, Aug 18

Worship videos will be posted also according to Pastor's schedule.



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, July 20th — Ordinary Time

Sun, Jul 20 2 PM Matinee Family Movie

Sunday, July 27th — Ordinary Time

Sun, July 27th through Sun, August 3rd — Pastor Jamie is attending the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Phoenix, AZ. Pastoral Care is provided by Pastor Katie Gallagher, 630-200-3288

Sunday, August 3rd — Ordinary Time

Mon, Aug 4 9:30 AM Sarah Circle
7 PM Building and Grounds

Thur, Aug 7 6 PM Council Workshop Meeting

Sat, Aug 9 11:00 AM Women's Fun Brunch

Sunday, August 10th—Ordinary Time

Tue, Aug 12 6 PM Council Meeting

Sunday, August 17th—Ordinary Time

Sun, Aug 17 4 PM Southwest Conference
Worship at Lake Storey, Galesburg

Wed, Aug 20 and Thur, Aug 21

7:45 AM First Day of Schools Donuts
Day in Parking Lot

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



Jul 21 Patt Holland
Jul 25 Barb Peterson
Jul 26 Konner Elliott
Aug 2 Karen Erlandson
Aug 4 Doug Cruce
Aug 6 Angi Martin-Prudent
Aug 13 Brandon Reynolds
Aug 16 Rodger Ellison
Aug 17 Cara Jensen
Aug 23 Kenny Reynolds
Aug 24 Pam Best
Aug 25 Robin Johnson
Aug 25 Tammy Ravel
Aug 27 Kathy Fillman
Sep 1 Ila Roseberry
Sep 2 Kristi Millar
Sep 4 Chris Algren
Sep 8 Brian Elliott
Sep 12 Don Fillman
Sep 15 Harber Sprecher
Sep 23 Dennis Mann
Sep 25 Lacey Elliott
Sep 28 Maddie Blaesing
Oct 1 Kaylie Champion
Oct 4 Jamie Reynolds
Oct 7 Margaret Hackspacher



Jul 24 Michael & Julie Blaesing
Aug 4 Ray & Shelly Golden
Aug 13 Jack Coombs & Lindsay Martin
Aug 28 Hal & Kathy Tate
Sept 2 Dennis & Denise Mann
Sept 5 Bryan & Keri Osborn
Oct 11 Jamie & Katie Gallagher
Oct 15 Ken & Teresa Miller
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

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Emily Agema, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Hannah Taylor, Wes Lovdahl, Kay Baily, Barb Rees, Pam Best, Doug Moulden, Marlene Moulden

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

Throughout July, we will be collecting cash and in-kind donations for Lutheran World Relief school kits.

All cash collected will be used by members of our WELCA circles to purchase school kit items as they will be on sale soon. These school kits will go to LWR and distributed around the world. LWR serves in places of natural disaster and war, these kits ensure that youth can still get an education even when everything else is taken away from them.

Check our website for the full supply list for in-kind donations. Money may be placed in the glass jar under the Narthex window or mailed to the church office.. In Kind donations (the pens, pencils, etc) can be brought to worship or to the office during the week. If you are bringing it to the office, please call Pastor Jamie first to coordinate a time to meet.

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,

August, Kiwanis Club

September, Out of Darkness Walk,

October, Mosaic,

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise. —

Galatians 3:28-29

On Sunday afternoon, we hosted a family matinee movie. Bobbi, the director of our day care and preschool, and I selected the movie Zootopia mostly because its sequel is coming out soon (November 26, 2025). Zootopia is an original Disney movie that creates a world where animals are anthropomorphized—that is depicted as human like. The whole society is a blend of animals that interact much as if they were humans. In the center of this world is the capital city, Zootopia, a place where all animals live, works, and play in harmony. The harmony is broken, however, as predator animals are suddenly reverting to their predator ways and “going savage”. Caught up in the mystery of why this is happening is a young female rabbit who is trying to become the first rabbit to join the police force. Helping her solve the mystery is a fox, who may not have the highest reputation for staying above the law. Together, these two discover how the mayor (depicted as a lion) was framed, and how the assistant to the mayor (depicted as a sheep) was behind the whole controversy. Zootopia is saved and harmony reigns again. It is a wonderful children's movie. And it is even a greater allegory for adults to see a reflection of modern life.

One of the many adult themes hidden in the animation and cute story telling is the very real theme of racism and stereotypes. The movie portrays the ratio of predator animals to prey animals in almost the exact same proportions of the US population when you look at black versus white populations. The movie highlights how easily it is to become swept up into anti-other bias and gives us time to ponder why we hold onto stereotypes against “others”. This is the power of a great children's animated feature film. Sure, kids learn a great lesson—that a world is truly built best when diversity is embraced and welcomed and stereotypes are busted. But also, adults get to see a mirror held up against the reality we have built. Why is it that so many of our nation are right now swept up into anti-immigrant movements? Why are so many people cheering a concentration camp being built in Florida with an almost cartoonish name “Alligator Alcatraz”? Why are so many people turning a blind eye? Across our nation people of color are being targeted on the street and their citizenship or legal immigration status is not considered good enough, they are just different and therefore they must be doing something wrong. The themes Zootopia teaches are not new. Paul in his letter to the Galatians addressed this kind of out racism, and told us who follow Jesus exactly how we are supposed to see others. Perhaps we need to watch Zootopia again to be reminded that we need to embrace the diversity of our world, because all people—of all races, of all creeds, of all ethnicities, of all citizenships, of all nationalities — ALL are created by God, and all are a part of God's beautiful family.

Peace, Pastor Jamie