



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 29, 2025

Our Staff

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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,

I have family news to share with you. My wife, Katie, has accepted the call to be the Director of Congregational Transformation in the Nebraska Synod of the ELCA.

Katie will be moving to Nebraska to begin this new call in November. This position is a five-year, synod office staff position, where Katie will help small, scrappy congregations across all of Nebraska discern how God is calling them to be in mission in this new day and age. I am very excited for Katie and her new opportunity as she is very gifted for the kind of work she is heading into. And with this news, I also am sharing that I am not moving to Nebraska. I am remaining here in Monmouth.

What does this mean? Well, for starts it means we will have two family homes. And there will be times when Katie is able to do remote work for Nebraska from Monmouth. And there will be occasions, typically midweek, when I am able to travel to be with her in Nebraska. It will mean Katie and I will be navigating new calendars, new commitments, new ways of communicating, and new ways of staying connected. It also means nothing is changing here at First Lutheran. Let me assure you, I remain committed as your pastor to be here for your pastoral needs, to provide worship, and faith education; to walk with you on your faith journey remains my call.

And so you know, throughout this time you can always ask me how Katie is doing, have I seen her recently, how is she liking Nebraska, when will she be home next?

I know this is going to be rather interesting time for us as a family; having two homes in two states is not going to be easy. But Katie and I are confident that God is leading us through this opportunity; and we remain committed to each other, and remain committed to each call God has given us—here in Monmouth, and there in Nebraska.

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**

BYOB&B: Thinking Faithfully Out Loud

We are hosting a new Bible study that is being co-sponsored with the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in town. This study is designed to help us understand the hows and the whys of our theological thinking.

Why do we think about Jesus as Son of God, as the one who took the place for our sins? Why do we think about the end times? (Which again, will not happen in some rapture style event, which did not happen today, despite some social fervor suggesting it was supposed to.) Why do we use words like “Grace” “Forgiveness” “Reconciliation”? What do we mean when we say “Jesus Saves”?

There are many influences on our thinking theologically. And this study will help us learn all about these influences. It will be a no-judgement study, but a space for fair conversation. So join us on Tuesday mornings here in our own fellowship hall, beginning October 7th at 10 AM and Bring Your Own Bible and Beverage and share in growing in faith together.

The Chosen TV Series Watch Party

Continue watching The Chosen TV Series with your friends at church. Season 5 is now available and we will watch the episodes on Wednesday mornings at 10 AM with conversation about each episode following the watching. We will continue watching episodes through Wednesday, Nov 12.

To catch up on the seasons, check your favorite streaming services for options. Each season is 8 episodes long. The Chosen began in season one with Jesus gathering his disciples, and now the timeline of Season 5 brings us to the events of Holy Week.

The Chosen is historical/Biblical fiction, yet it follows many stories that we read in the Gospels. Our conversation is often filled with understanding the difference between the fictional TV narrative and the Gospel stories.

Halloween Fun Night

This year's Halloween Fun Night will be Tuesday, October 28th beginning at 6 PM.

We have coordinated with the MRHS Music Department for volunteers; the Scout Troop will be here once again; the Day Care is a Co-Sponsor of our event and will have folks here from teachers and the Board.

We are waiting to hear back from a couple others for their help.

Here are some ways you can help:

Volunteer for the set-up day on Monday, Oct 27 at 5 PM to help with decorations and assemble the treat bags.

Volunteer on the night of to help with the welcome table, with snacks, or to help with the photo booth

Donate candy treats ... we expect about 200 people based on previous years events. Candy may be brought to the office any time in October, or to any Sunday worship and given to Pastor Jamie

You can also help by bringing your family and friends the night of the event and just having fun. There will be games, candy, crafts, candy, photos, candy, and new this year a animatronic music playing skeleton DJ ... and did we mention candy?

Halloween Fun Night, Tuesday, October 28th .. 6 PM to 7 PM. Join us for a great time celebrating the holiday.



Mark Your Calendars Now:

Tuesday, October 28, Halloween Fun Night

Sunday, November 2, Congregational All Saints Soup Luncheon, following Worship

4 PM at Faith Lutheran, Rochelle, the Northern Illinois Synod Gathering to celebrate accomplishing the ELCA World Hunger Giving Challenge

Sunday, November 23, following worship decorate for Advent/Christmas

Sunday, November 30, First Sunday of Advent

Wednesday, December 24th, Christmas Eve Worship

NIS World Hunger Celebration

You are invited to attend a celebration hosted by the NIS World Hunger committee on Sunday, November 2nd at 4 PM at Faith Lutheran Church in Rochelle, IL.

This celebration includes worship and a sandwich/cake reception after worship. Pastor Jamie, who has been instrumental with the World Hunger Committee plans and announcement and promotion of this challenge, will be a worship leader. Bishop Stacie Fidler will be preacher. And we will have special guests from ELCA World Hunger.

This is a synod event, so you will get to meet other Lutherans from across Northern Illinois and hear about how their congregations met the challenge and be further encouraged as this is not an end to our giving, but a moment to celebrate a massive gift and a moment to encourage continued generosity.

WELCA Southwest Fall Conference Gathering

Saturday, October 18th, the WELCA Groups of the churches of the Southwest Conference will gather here at First Lutheran Church at 8:30 AM for breakfast and registration, and 9:00 AM for the program. Speakers are from the Open Table of West Illinois who will share their successes with individuals and families impacted by generational poverty.

All women the of church are invited to attend. RSVP by Oct 12th to Pam Van Kirk.



Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

Worship begins with time for reflection and breathing in the Holy Spirit. This is why the prelude music comes after our announcements. We deal with all our outside stuff first; then we stop and center ourselves and let the music guide us into the time of holiness.

In much the same manner, the postlude functions as a musical interlude transitioning us back into the outside stuff. Though, far too often once the dismissal is said, we are ready to bolt for the door, and race back into the rest of our day and the week ahead.

You are invited and encouraged to take the moment of prelude and postlude to center yourself into God, and center yourself into the world, to breathe in the Holy Spirit for worship, to breathe in the Holy Spirit for life today and this week.

And you are invited to remember our musicians, Janice and Carolyn, and to share with them your gratitude for the way their giftedness for music draws us in and out of our time for worship.

Worship Guild Members

October 5 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Doug Cruce
Reader:	Chip Algren
Com Asst:	Dee Dee Yez
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

October 12 — Ordinary Time

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

October 19 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Diane Carlson
Reader:	Kurt Volz
Com Asst:	Steve Erlandson
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Carolyn Kellert

October 26 — Reformation Sunday

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



Heritage Bible Church

2025 Fall Indian Taco Supper, Monday September 29th, drive-thru only, 4:30 PM—7:00 PM, 302 East Broadway, Monmouth.

\$9.00 donation; taco and ice cream. Proceeds support Strom Center

Gerlaw Christian Church "Save our Steeple"

Craft Sale/Quilt Show/Lasagna Dinner

Wednesday, October 1, 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM;

945 245th Street, Gerlaw

Vendors welcome, for more information, contact Emily Moore at (309) 271-1862

Mosaic Partners in Possibilities Fundraiser

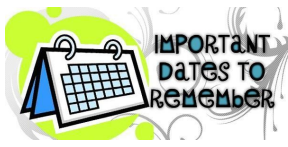
Thursday, October 23, from noon to 1 PM

Park Place Event Center

127 E Carroll Street, Macomb

Mosaic invites you to join them for a one-hour event to discover how you can help Mosaic further its mission of relentlessly pursuing opportunities that empower people. A free lunch is included in this event.

For more information, or to sign up to attend, call or email Melody Robertson by October 10th. (309) 648-7617 or melody.robertson@mosaicinfo.org



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, September 28th — Ordinary Time

Wed, Oct 1 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sunday, October 5th — Ordinary Time

Mon, Oct 6 9:30 AM Sarah Circle

7 PM Building/Grounds meeting

Tues, Oct 7 10 AM BYOB&B study

Wed, Oct 8 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sunday, October 12th—Ordinary Time

Tues, Oct 14 10 AM BYOB&B Study

6 PM Council

Wed, Oct 15 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Sat, Oct 18 8:30 AM WELCA Southwest
Conference Fall Gathering

Sunday, October 19th—Ordinary Time

Mon, Oct 20 6:30 PM Pathways Team Meeting

Tues, Oct 21 10 AM BYOB&B study

Wed, Oct 22 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

Thur, Oct 23-Sat, Oct 25 Pastor in Chicago for
Heerwagen wedding

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



Oct 1 Kaylie Champion

Oct 4 Jamie Reynolds

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

Oct 30 Bryan Osborn

Nov 9 Ted Hanson

Nov 14 Theodore Coombes

Nov 15 Troy Hippen

Nov 19 Jan Martin

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



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

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

Prayer Requests

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

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

Throughout September, we are supporting the Out of Darkness, Suicide Prevention Walk.

It doesn't take much to realize just how much we are impacted by Suicide. Every one of us knows someone personally or indirectly who has taken their own life. Not one of us thought that could happen. That's because a person with suicidal thoughts masks those thoughts really well.

So, our donations this month help create resources for those who have lost a loved one; for those who have thoughts of ending their life; and for communities on how to create a welcoming space where people who have mental illness are not ostracized or stigmatized, but are welcome, valued, and allowed to live into their giftedness for the world.

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,

October, Mosaic,

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



[Abraham] said to [the rich man], "If [your brothers] do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead." — Luke 16:31

Luke 16 is a parable from Jesus that has a rich man and a poor man named Lazarus who die on the same day. In the after-life realm, Lazarus is being comforted and the rich man is being tormented. As the rich man is being tormented, he can see Lazarus receiving comfort, so the rich man tries to receive just a little bit of cool water from Lazarus. But he is denied by Abraham as there is a large chasm between them; and the rich man is told that both he and Lazarus are getting after-life treatment based on the way they lived. The parable ends with the final gut-punch that the rich man's brothers won't change their ways even if a dead man rises to tell them to, especially if they won't listen to Moses and the prophets.

This parable is a fairy tale style lesson, much like what Mother Goose or the Brother's Grimm told. This isn't about telling us what will happen in the afterlife, it is about helping us see how we live matters today. In this life, we are equated with the rich man, a man who in the story doesn't even have a name. We are the one who at our doorsteps, sometimes literally, sometimes figuratively, have poor people, like the man named Lazarus, laying there waiting for any form of help or compassion or mercy. Jesus' parable outlines a big reversal of fortune that awaits us. We who do not see the needs of others will not have comfort; while those who are unseen in this life, will receive all the comfort they need. It is a story that also sounds very similar to Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol where Ebenezer Scrooge meets 4 ghosts and by the end of the story realizes he needs to change his life, and he does. And that is what Jesus is trying to get us to hear ... that we need to change our life today, that those who we are choosing to not see need us to see them, need us to have compassion and mercy for them, and to help them receive the equity and dignity they need today.

It is very popular in our current cultural climate to want to be the rich man who gets to ignore the needy, to deny others dignity or worth because of skin color, gender identity, sexual orientation, or a vast number of other human imagined distinctions. We have government officials and think tank talking heads championing discrimination, taking away social safety nets, ending funding for compassion work, straining relief work, and stifling welcome. Jesus says, you have all the scriptures in the world to tell you this is wrong. The parable even gives us a chance to reflect how we might react if someone rises from the dead to tell us the right way to live. And to be clear, Jesus rose from the dead to show us the error of our ways when we ignore and mistreat others; we now have Moses, the prophets, and the Risen Jesus telling us to see those who are unseen, to treat others with compassion and mercy, to be a community of welcome and love. Peace, Pastor Jamie