



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 14, 2026

Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher

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Musicians: Janice Algren

Carolyn Kellert

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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 hope you had time to enjoy some of the Prime Beef Festival this weekend. The parade was really fun. Once again, our scouting units - both pack and troop - got to lead the parade carrying the flags. We had one of our Troop Scouts carry the American flag and one of the Cub Scouts carried the Illinois flag. This was a first time for each of these scouts, and they did a great job for the whole parade. Teaching scouts about how to participate in civic moments like this is one of the goals of scouting, so again, be proud that our church charters these scouting units and provides this experience for both boys and girls.

This last weekend, we also remembered the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11/01. Somber memorials were held around the nation, especially at the sites of each of the plane attacks. Remembrance programs were aired on TV networks and streaming services. For those of us who experienced that day, we know just how much it impacted the world around us, how that one day changed so much of normal life. What that day can never change is the faith and hope we have in Christ who compels us still to pray for our enemy, to do good in a world full of brokenness, and to promote resurrection life where we find death. However you recalled that fateful day this weekend, may your faith in Christ be your guide forward always.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM

Worship

Sunday School

Sept 27

Oct 11 and 25

9:45 AM

The Bible Says So

A fall Bible Study on Wednesday nights in our Fellowship Hall

October 7, 14, and 21

November 4, 11, and 18

at 7:00 PM

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.

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



Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Center (1834 S IL Route 2, Oregon, IL) is hosting its annual Autumn Fest on Saturday, October 10th with activities from 10 and to 3 PM. Activities include Pumpkin Caring, Cider Pressing, and Wagon Rides. Lunch is served from 11 am to 1 PM and there is a worship service to close that day that begins at 3 PM.

Lunch is a build your own hot dog bar, and costs \$10. Reserve your lunch ticket early by registering at LOMC.org

Women of the ELCA Northern Illinois Synod 2026 Annual Convention

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

9AM - 3PM

 New Life Lutheran Church
249 N Bolingbrook Drive
Bolingbrook, IL

Registration and coffee start at 8:00 a.m.



All women in the Northern Illinois Synod are welcome to attend the 2026 Annual Convention, I Am Worthy, All Are Worthy, on Saturday, September 19, at New Life Lutheran Church in Bolingbrook.

Our worship will be led by Pastor Julie Monnard, Assistant to the Bishop, and Pastor Lindsay Fertig-Johnson, Synod Generosity Director and Associate Pastor at New Life in Bolingbrook.

Our afternoon breakout sessions will be led by Pastor Pat Fish and Yenny Muñoz-Swainger.
Registration information at www.nisynod.org

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.



The Season After Pentecost May 31 to November 22

Worship is grounded in Word and Sacrament.

The Lutheran Church teaches there are 2 sacraments: baptism and communion. These sacraments are commanded by Jesus and have an earthly element that helps us experience the promise of God.

While baptism is considered an entrance sacrament, and therefore happens only once, there are ways we remember our baptism every week in worship. With confession and forgiveness and by professing our faith with the words of the creed.

Communion is considered a sustaining sacrament, as we receive this as often as it is provided in worship. Here at the table, bread and wine represent the body and blood of Jesus, broken and restored for us, that we may also live even when our lives are so damaged by sin.

Join us in worship, and experience both sacraments.

Worship Guild Members

September 20-- Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: Pam Best
Reader: Judy Sanberg
Communion: Julie Blaesing *
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

September 27 -- Sunday after Pentecost

Usher: Mark Strader
Reader: Pam Best
Communion: Diane Carlson
Narthex: Linda McGuire
Musician: Janice Algren

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

*Changes from original publishing due to schedule changes

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 will also have a congregation luncheon following worship that morning.

Details about the lunch will be coming soon.

Thank you from Connie

Thank you to all the great volunteers that help us so much with the Prime Beef Drive Thru.

It was a job well done.

Thank you,

Connie Larimer



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.



Sunday, September 13th - Season After Pentecost
Sun, Sep 13 - 9:45 AM Sunday School

11:00 AM Forum for new Sharing
Joy worship tradition

Mon, Sep 14 - 7 PM Scout Pack/Troop

Committee Meeting

Wed, Sept 16 - 5:30 PM Matthew Study Recap
Dinner

Sunday, September 20th - Season After Pentecost

Sunday, September 27th - Season After Pentecost

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

Mon, Sep 28 to Wed, Sep 30 - Pastor Attends

Northern Illinois Synod Professional
Leaders' Conference

Sunday, October 4th - Season After Pentecost

Wed, Oct 7 - 7 PM The Bible Says So study

Sunday, October 11th - Season After Pentecost

Sun, Oct 11 - 9:45 AM Sunday School

Tues, Oct 13th - 6 PM Council Meeting

Wed, Oct 14th - 7 PM the Bible Says So study

Sunday, October 18th - Season After Pentecost

Wed, Oct 21st - 7 PM The Bible Says So study

Sunday, October 25th - Reformation Sunday

Sun, Oct 25 - 9:45 AM Sunday School

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

Thurs, Oct 29 - 6 PM Halloween Fun Night Event



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

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

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

Prayer Requests

Janet Lowe, Pat Clark, Dee Dee Yez, Richard Schlicher, Donna Winbigler, John Van Kirk, the family and friends of Cecil Lovdahl

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



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 Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times." --
Matthew 18:21-22

Forgiveness is hard. Math is harder. Forgiveness + Math is near impossible. Our Gospel writer groups together some lessons of forgiveness together, from how to reconcile with a member of the church, to how often to forgive, to a large debt being forgiven to illustrate God's forgiveness to us. And the way this comes across it sounds like we should just be able to easy-peasy forgive and the world is suddenly a better place.

But we all know that putting this into practice is much harder. Why should we forgive someone who always argues with us over political topics? Why should we forgive someone who ignores our personal boundaries, or who insults us? What happens if someone murders our loved one? How do we forgive that? We know it can all be done. We have seen some who seem to forgive easily, who let things slide, who don't let it bother them. We know that sometimes when bad things happen good can somehow be found creeping alongside. But not all evil comes with a good side-effect. Not all bad things can be forgiven, especially when bad things keep getting repeated. So, yes, forgiveness is hard. And when it comes with math, it becomes harder. And forgiveness is supposed to be hard. But forgiveness also comes with reconciliation, it comes with change, it comes with newness of life. Forgiveness is never done in a vacuum. Take God's forgiveness -- you are forgiven of all your sins, but if you do not change your ways, have you really been forgiven? If you keep insulting God by breaking the commands to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, welcome the outsider/stranger, tend the sick, aid the poor - sure God forgives you, but what difference does that make? Likewise, if we forgive the abuser but the abuse continues, what has changed? Nothing. So forgiveness is hard not because saying the words "I forgive you" is hard; not because actually meaning "You are forgiven" is hard; forgiveness is hard because it is intended to result in a new way of being together. The injury/harm is supposed to stop. The insults are to end. The pushing boundaries ceases. The political conversations become civil, and with a goal of aiding people and no longer about telling another group they are absolutely evil. Forgiveness is hard. But the change that comes with being forgiven, the change that comes with saying the other is forgiven -- that is harder. But this is why our motivation for forgiveness is not to receive salvation from God; rather it is a result of our having been forgiven first and foremost by a loving God who is the store of infinite forgiveness.

Peace, Pastor Jamie