



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 :: May 5, 2025

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Vice President: Mark Shrader

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Chip Algren

Pam Best

Brian Elliott

Adam Sanberg

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

Last week I was able to attend the Queer Intersectionality and the Public Church Symposium: Queer Joy as Resistance conference at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. It was an amazing symposium. I met several wonderful church leaders and reconnected with a few long-time friends. The symposium had at its heart how church welcomes and creates space for God's queerly beloved children, who so often in our society (and even in many church spaces) are excluded or are marginalized or victimized by those who want to dominate others thoughts, identities, and moralities. I have come to experience First Lutheran, our beloved congregation here in Monmouth, as a very progressive and open congregation, which this symposium affirmed. Yet even as progressive and open as we are, there are a few areas we still need to pay attention to, if we are going to truly be welcoming for all of God's children.

The biggest shift will come in terms of using more expansive language to describe God and our community. But, the hope is that in making this shift, it will be so subtle that long time Lutherans won't even notice a change, while those looking in from the outside will suddenly feel they are included in ways never experienced before. Friends, in the end, this symposium highlighted the need for community and relationship building. That is what people who are LGBTQIA+ desire the most. And that is what we offer. We offer community and relationship building. It is why we come here, it is why we welcome each other and greet one another each week in worship. It is why we wonder why someone is absent this week. It is a gift that we get to offer to all who seek it, and especially those who seek it when it is so denied by the rest of society. May we always find ourselves creating the community all the outcast want to join.

Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Coffee

10:00 AM Worship

**The Spring Bible Study will be
Wednesday mornings in the
month of May at 10 AM**

Spring Bible Study

It is time to engage the Bible once more. And we are going to take a look this Spring at the book of Revelation. We will gather on the four Wednesdays of May at 10 AM in Pastor's study for this quick study.

The book of Revelation is often mired in mystery and has been used and abused for a variety of ill-gotten means. So what is the history of this book so shrouded in mystery? What does it offer to us? What are the myths surrounding it?

Join us beginning Wednesday, May 7th at 10 AM for the start of this wonderful Bible study.

And ... pay attention to the readings throughout the season of Easter. We will be reading from Revelation and sharing some insights about what Easter joy is found in this text throughout all of the season of Easter.

Synod Assembly Delegates

Every year our congregation participates in the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly. We are able to send 2 delegates. The Assembly is an opportunity to learn more about our shared ministry with congregations across northern Illinois, to discuss resolutions that impact our ministry together, and to pass a synod budget. The assembly is a 2 day event held at Augustana College in Rock Island. This year the assembly takes place on Friday, June 13 and Saturday, June 14.

Kurt Volz has agreed to attend as one delegate. We still need one additional delegate. Please speak with Pastor Jamie or Pam Van Kirk if you are able to attend.

Community Care Days

Community Care Days will be held this year on June 13th and 14th

Applications for projects you would like done by a community care days volunteer are now available in the office.

Volunteers are needed to help accomplish the projects that are approved. Please speak with Steve Erlandson about your availability to help on either Friday, June 13th or Saturday, June 14th. Basic home skills needed, but all the supplies are provided, and you will be working with other volunteers to accomplish these tasks.

Monmouth Roseville High School

Pops Concert

Tuesday, May 13th at 6 PM is the MRHS Pops Concert. This concert features the high school bands and choirs and wonderful desserts — a variety of baked goods and ice cream

At the Pops Concert, the music department will recognize it's state championship. This year, the department is giving First Lutheran the same medal the students receive, to demonstrate their gratitude for our congregation providing practice space throughout February. Pastor Jamie will be receiving the medal on behalf of the congregation. All are welcome to come for the concert.

Jeopardy Watch Party Invitation

(some may know that our own Heather Ide was a contestant on the TV Quiz Show Jeopardy. The episode she is featured on airs May 30th. This is an invite to a watch party to celebrate with Heather her airing on this popular Answer/Question game show)

All are invited to a Jeopardy viewing/Grad school graduation party for Heather Ide on Friday, May 30th from 4 PM to 6 PM at Simulation Sports (the former Review Atlas Building, 400 South Main Street, Monmouth). Enter at the back (west side) entrance.

Heather earned her Master's Degree in Library Science from the University of Illinois in December, 2024.

She also earned a spot on the game show Jeopardy!. She filmed her episode in March and it will air on May 30th at 4:30 PM.

Refreshments will be served and there are several big screen televisions and comfortable seating. Please join us if you are able!

— Invitation from Pam and Tom Best and Heather Ide

May Celebrations

Sunday, May 11th, we will recognize mothers and all women of the congregation as we celebrate Mother's Day.

If you know of a graduate who needs to be recognized in May, please let Pastor Jamie know so we can schedule a time for that recognition.

New Resources on Website

On our website, we have a resource tab, and under that tab is a new page for LGBTQIA+ resources. Please share with folks who are looking for such resources. More will be added in the coming weeks. For now, there is a link to the Trans hotline and to the Trevor Project. As well as a resource from the state of Illinois that lists many organizations across the state that help with everything from legal to mental health resources. If you have a recommendation to add to this page, please let Pastor Jamie know.



Easter Season April 20 to June 1

Hope and Encouragement during a time of great suffering, this could be the tag line for Revelation, the final book of the scriptures. Written in the very late 1st century CE, or possibly the very early 2nd century CE, Revelation offers just that—hope and encouragement in a time of great suffering. The earliest Christians were quickly becoming outcasts from the Jewish religion they were still very much a part of. And at the same time, they were becoming outcasts from a political realm that didn't like upstart religions, let alone a religion that denounced the Caesar as Lord and called anyone else Lord.

So writing messages of hope and encouragement could be a dangerous thing in that era. This is why the author took great care to use images that Christians would have known, but which would have been baffling to the Roman authorities.

Today, we still live in a time of great suffering. And we still need to be able to hear a message of hope and encouragement. Even if the original meaning of these images are a bit ancient, we can sift through them and discover that ultimate message and receive hope and encouragement.

Sacred Prayer

An alternate version of the Lord's Prayer

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Creator of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: the hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the people of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In the times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen

From the New Zealand Book of Prayer.

Worship Guild Members

May 11 — Easter 4th Sunday

Usher:	Kurt Volz
Reader:	Chip Algren
Com Asst:	Mark Shrader
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

May 18 — Easter 5th Sunday

Guest Preacher:	Pastor Mark Juliot
Usher:	Adam Sanberg
Reader:	Maddie Blaesing
Com Asst:	Chip Algren
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

May 25 — Easter 6th Sunday

Usher:	Pam Best
Reader:	Kurt Volz
Com Asst:	N/A
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

June 1 — Easter 7th Sunday

Usher:	Mark Shrader
Reader:	Doug Cruce
Com Asst:	Julie Blaesing
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

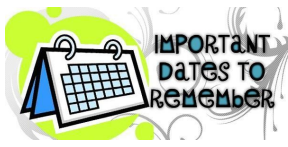


Worship and Liturgy

These two go hand in hand, like a Lutheran seasonally appropriately colored Jello and hot dish potluck supper. We have so long used the same format for worship, and even the same words, even if occasionally we have mixed them up to different tunes.

But lost in the “And-also-with-yous” and harmonized hymns are generational shifts in attention span, declining biblical fluency, and connection to ancient words.

Pastor Jamie will be exploring offering a different style of worship. After some conversation with council and a few conversation/listening events, something new may well be on the horizon. Watch here for more to come.



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, May 4th — 3rd Easter Sunday

Mon, May 5th—9:30 AM Sarah Circle

7 PM Building/Grounds Committee

Wed, May 7th—10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, May 11th—4th Easter Sunday,

Sun, May 11th—Mothers' Day

Mon, May 12th—6 PM Council *(date change)

Tues, May 13th—6 PM MRHS Pops Concert

Wed, May 14th—10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, May 18th—5th Easter Sunday

Sun, May 18th—11:15 AM Pathways Meeting
with Pastor Mark Juliot

Wed, May 21st—10 AM Bible Study

Fri, May 23—Tues, May 27 Pastor on Vacation

Sunday, May 25th—6th Easter Sunday

Mon, May 26—Memorial Day

Wed, May 28—10 AM Bible Study

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



May 6 Andrew Youngquist

May 7 Jacob Ide

May 8 Sophie Shrader

May 9 Pastor Katie

Gallagher

May 16 Shelly Golden

May 18 Todd Champion

May 19 Carl Hamburg

May 22 Linda Ellison

May 22 Lorene Nelson

May 26 David Sandstrom

May 27 Charlotte Sanberg

May 28 Lena Johnson

May 28 Nancy Reynolds

May 29 Kaylee Teel

May 31 Dean Sandstrom

May 31 Tammy Slater

Jun 2 Alexia Golden

Jun 2 Jarrod Hippen

Jun 2 Susie Jurgens

Jun 6 Rose Youngquist

Jun 11 Wendy Anderson

Jun 21 Aaron Jensen

Jun 30 Collin Nuckles

Jul 3 Trudy Bergren

Jul 3 Hal Tate

Jul 4 Jennifer Sprecher

Jul 8 Marlene Moulden



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 11 David & DeeDee Yez

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

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Emily Agema, Cecil Lovdahl, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Hannah Taylor, Suzanne Lovdahl, Wes Lovdahl, Grace Banks

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

The Teen Recharge Center in Monmouth serves youth from ages 13 to 19. It is a safe place for local teens to go after school to hang out with their peers, work on homework and participate in fun programs and events.

The Recharge Teen Center offers a variety of activities such as gardening, art, cooking, mental health practices, and more.

Teens enroll at the center with parent/guardian permission. And a calendar of events is posted at their website: www.eagleviewhealth.org/teen-center

Thank you for supporting our local teen center.

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

June, St. Jude Run (Wendy Anderson)

July, LWR School Kits,

August, Kiwanis Club

September, Out of Darkness Walk,

October, Mosaic,

November, Lutheran Day Care and Pre-School,

December, Jamieson Center,



Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands and thousands, singing with a full voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"

Revelation 5:11-12

Have you ever wondered how loud it will be when we are in God's full presence? The author of Revelation describes myriads and myriads and thousands and thousands singing. I've got to imagine it is going to be quite deafening being in God's full presence. Sound has a way of blocking out a lot of what goes on in our minds. This is why we crank up a favorite song while driving; or why we have to fall asleep with some white noise. Our brains begin to quiet as the noise surrounds us, everything we are thinking about just settles and goes away, and there is just the music, just the white noise of a fan or a gentle rain calming us down.

The author of Revelation offers us this idea that being in God's full presence will have that sort of effect—where our brains will finally be able to stop and our worries, our anxieties, our stresses, all the things we hold onto, the grudges, the hurts, the things we said we wish we could take back, the painful things said to us, the darkest hatreds and scorn against another — everything that clogs our minds now will have to stop. We won't be able to think about any of it. We won't be able to focus on any of that painful stuff. The sound of myriads and myriads, of thousands and thousands singing God's praise will simply center us on the only thing that matters. That is what the author of Revelation imagines it will be like in God's full presence.

We get a taste of this when we gather as a community and sing our hymns and songs of praise. For a few moments, the music echoes in our minds, for a few moments we are centered, for a few moments we set aside all the things that distract us and weigh us down and take us away from experiencing God's full presence here in our daily lives. Sure the author is describing what it will be like when we are all gathered in God's full presence when this life is over; but the author is using this imagery to encourage us to gather here and now, to remind us here and now, that as we sing God's praise today, gathered even as a few, we indeed are in God's full presence here and now. May the hymns we sing in worship be a centering moment, a time when your brain stops with all that distracts us from what truly matters, and bring you into the full presence of God.

Peace, Pastor Jamie