



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 22, 2025

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Pam Best

Brian Elliott

Adam Sanberg

Kurt Volz

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

What a fascinating week away, attending two conferences. It is still, no matter how good the conferences were, good to be home. While attending both the Northern Illinois Synod Professional Leaders' Conference and the ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering, I was able to share the good news that our synod has achieved the \$100,000 matching goal, that our synod had additional donor who set new goals beyond that \$100,000, and how we will achieve those goals quite easily, too. This means we will be sending over a quarter million dollars to ELCA World Hunger from donations gathered between March 16 and October 16 this year. More donations were received before the campaign started, and more will follow once the campaign ends, which will mean our synod will likely top \$300,000 in total gifts in 2025 to ELCA World Hunger! And each time I announced this, there was great cheer and acclamation.

The work is not done. ELCA World Hunger is a \$22 million dollar ministry each year, with partners both domestically and internationally, using those funds for education, advocacy, immediate relief, and long-term sustainable projects. ELCA World Hunger has a wholistic approach and supports ministries that provide early childhood development, water filtration and well systems, healthcare, sustainable farming practices, and more.

So, again, thank you to your support of ELCA World Hunger through our synod's matching program. The story of how we raised \$2,600+ for this year's campaign is now known across the ELCA and is inspiring other to discover what their generosity will be until All Are Fed.

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, 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.

Our first Wednesday back for this is September 24.

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 has forever been centered around Sunday mornings. It is on Sundays for Christians, because sometime early on in Church history, it was decided to worship on the day Jesus rose from the dead.

Today, Sunday mornings for many is an opportunity to rest; it is an opportunity to run errands because our Saturdays are filled with other things; it is an opportunity to visit with family or friends we don't get to see because the rest of our week is too busy; and for some, Sunday is a day to work, because that is just how the schedule happens.

For those unable to join us on Sundays, please do go to our website and check out our worship videos that are posted. Worship videos currently are posted going back to Easter Sunday. Though typically, we do try to keep our worship videos going back only about 3 months or so on the webpage itself. But here is something to consider, throughout the week, when you have a few moments here and there, watch another section of the video, replay a hymn the congregation sings, or listen again to a message you found inspiring. Worship doesn't have to be just Sunday anymore.

Worship Guild Members

September 28 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Chip Algren
Reader:	Ellen Shrader
Com Asst:	Gary Sanberg
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

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:	Carolyn Kellert
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

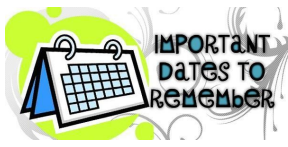
Thursday, October 23, from noon to 1 PM

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 21st—Ordinary Time

Mon, Sep 22 6:30 PM Pathways Team Zoom meeting

Wed, Sep 24 10 AM The Chosen Watch Party

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.



Sep 25 Lacey Elliott

Sep 28 Maddie Blaesing

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,



He has told you, O Mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? — Micah 6:8

Last Thursday, I arrived at the ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering which this year was held in Columbus, Ohio. Columbus is a special place for Katie and I, it is where we went to seminary. While there, I had a chance to reminisce on my time working at a food pantry, one place where I really began to understand the need to help people who were hungry. The food pantry was located in a neighborhood that had a derogatory nickname "Uzi Alley", so named for the rapid gunfire that once was a big part of the gang life that encompassed the neighborhood. By the time I was working there, much of that violence had been quelled, and the reputation of the neighborhood was changing. And it was a very diverse community. The pantry served white folks, Hispanic folks, a variety of folks from different African nations, and a small population of Russian Jews. And serving in such a diverse space taught me a tremendous lesson. Most of those folks who came in to the pantry did so and quietly received the help they needed. Some of the folks came in with a scowl on their face. They saw me as just another in a revolving door of folks who came and threw bags of food at them and didn't really care. In particular, the Russian Jewish folks were resistant to speaking English and who can blame them, they were forced out of their homes, they were tired of the hand-outs, and even more tired of a system that forced them to stay impoverished.

One day after struggling to figure out how to communicate with these good people, I and a friend went out and bought a Russian-English dictionary. This was well before google translate. So we had to do the hard work ourselves. My friend and I taught ourselves all of our food pantry questions in Russian. And these folks came in the next day to new signage, and me trying to pronounce their language. Initially they laughed at me. Then after a few days of me still trying, they began correcting my pronunciations. Then after I had been saying everything right for a few weeks, they began talking with me in English. They recognized that I was not just another rotating, not caring person. I was someone who came to meet them where they were. This is the justice Micah speaks about, this is the loving kindness the prophet calls us to; this is what walking humbly with our God is all about. And this is what ELCA World Hunger is about, it is not just charity for the sake of throwing food at someone. It is about accompanying our neighbor in their struggle, learning about their journey, entering their sacred space of being. Our congregation has demonstrated this same kind of accompaniment with our Chin Church neighbors, and it is a beautiful thing when we learn helping others isn't about the other becoming like us, but us becoming like the other. And so, again, thank you for your support of ELCA World Hunger this year, and going forward. Because this is how we live the call from Micah.

Peace, Pastor Jamie