



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

MONMOUTH, IL

116 S. B Street, Monmouth, IL 61462; (309)734-2106

www.flcmonmouth.org; email: office@flcmonmouth.org

Follow us on Facebook @FLCMonmouth.org



Gathered by God, We Live Our Faith With:
Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy.

Our Church—This Week :: June 2, 2025

Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher

prjamie@flcmonmouth.org

Cell (630)200-3550

Musicians: Janice Algren

Carolyn Kellert

Preschool and Day Care Director

Bobbi Nees

(309) 734-5350

Congregation Council

President: Pam Van Kirk

Vice President: Mark Shrader

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Chip Algren

Pam Best

Brian Elliott

Adam Sanberg

Dee Dee Yez

Dear Friends and Family,

What a beautiful baptismal celebration we had yesterday in worship. We welcomed Lewis Edward Sanberg, son of Adam and Gina Sanberg, into the family of God through the sacrament of Baptism. And it was a wonderful occasion for the Sanberg family and the whole family of God at First Lutheran. Baptism reminds us that God has claimed us as an heir to the promise of Christ. Nothing can take this promise away from us. Because God's action in our life is never dependent on our actions. Yes, we fall short of the glory of God. Yes, we falter with moments of doubt. Yes, we harm our neighbor and do not love as we ought. But the Good News is God washes all that away in the waters of baptism. Now, it doesn't give us permission to go on raging against the world and wreaking havoc everywhere we go. It does give us the moment to pause each day to recognize where we fall short, where we don't love as we ought to, where we have erred, and then to say, "Lord, as you washed away my sin, lead me today in the newness of life you have called me to." This is the joy of baptism. We have a place in God's kingdom forever. And we have the Holy Spirit guiding us and empowering us to become better each day.

Now as we look into June, a reminder our newsletters will be every other week for the summer time. Stay current with changes to ministry events through our regular emails, social media (Facebook page), and website.

For those traveling this month, blessings on your travels. May you find the rest you need, the joy you seek, and the memories that will last a lifetime in your heart.

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**

Strawberry Festival

Our Annual Strawberry Festival will be held on Thursday, June 12th.

Dinner served from 5 PM to 7 PM. The Monmouth Community Band will play a concert at 6 PM in the sanctuary.

Menu: BBQ sandwiches, chips, dessert includes ice cream and strawberry topping.

Free Will Donations.

Volunteers and donations will be needed.



Semi Annual Meeting

DATE CHANGE

Sunday, June 22nd, following worship, is our semi-annual meeting. This meeting is set for electing council and committee members.

If you are interested in serving our church on council or on a committee, please speak with Pam Van Kirk.

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.

Northern Illinois Synod Hunger Challenge

In March, we heard the Northern Illinois Synod announce a ELCA World Hunger giving challenge, and our congregation stepped up huge. So far, as of the end of April, nearly \$15,500 has been received by the synod towards this challenge.

And we celebrate \$2600 of that is from our congregation alone.

We continue to support this challenge. You may go to www.nisynod.org/hunger to donate online and continue helping our synod achieve the goal of raising \$100,000 by October 16th to receive a matching grant of that same amount.

Theology of the Cross—a Primer

Throughout the month of June, our FB Page will have special posts on Mondays introducing a philosophical framework called the Theology of the Cross. This is a philosophical framework that we use as Lutherans to teach about the Bible, our faith in God, and who God is.

Each Monday there will be two or three graphics with a rather brief introduction to themes and concepts found within the Theology of the Cross. This is being shared to help make us aware of how we are classically trained to think about all these faith matters. See, we do not approach the Bible just as blank people. God is not self-evident in the world around us. We cannot talk about our faith absent some organizing way about it. For most of us, we just assume Christianity is one unified voice that is just self-evident from scripture. But, we are not unified. This is why it is important to be able to name our philosophical framework.

For example, we can point to the four gospels and cite the four passages that describe Jesus' death on a cross. There are even a few passages in the letters by Paul, James, Peter, and by anonymous writers (such as the Letter to Hebrews), that describe in different ways what that death on a cross means. Some Christians today say that Jesus died for our sins, and only when we confess our sins are we forgiven. Other Christians say Jesus died to reconcile the entire creation, not just humans. While others still claim Jesus died only for certain humans that God has identified according to a random set of conditions. And now, just three sentences later, you are already confused because you thought it was self-evident why Jesus died on the cross and thought everyone just thought about it the same way you did.

Now, you can see why for more complex issues—gender roles in the church, relationship roles and marriage, healthcare and rights to choose one's own healthcare needs—we Christians do not all think the same. We have framework that has been developed by years of experience, reading, listening, studying, assuming, and being by being bombarded by certain cultural forces. And this framework says more about how we respond to matters of faith than scriptures themselves do.

The purpose of sharing the Theology of the Cross in these posts is to bring awareness and learning and a time for questioning. Later this fall, a more thorough Bible study will be offered exploring this in more detail. Watch for details later this summer.



stjuderuns.org



Dear Family and Friends,

I need your help! I am honored to be participating in the 44th Annual St. Jude Memphis to Peoria Run from Tuesday, July 29 - Saturday, August 2, 2025. Over 2,500 runners will run relay-style from 35 different satellite cities to Peoria, Illinois, raising funds for the kids of St. Jude. Each run ends in downtown Peoria where the participants, exhausted and full of excitement, gather to cross the finish line during the 48th Annual St. Jude Telethon. Please consider showing your support by donating to my personal fundraising goal.

St. Jude Runs began in 1982, with the mission to provide funds in support of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN. Since inception, St. Jude Runs has raised an astounding \$88,148,379 for this great organization!

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital® is leading the way the world understands, treats and defeats childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Through contributions like yours, families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel, housing or food — so they can focus on helping their child live. Every child deserves a chance to live their best life and celebrate every moment. When you support St. Jude, you can help make cures possible for kids with cancer. Together, we can save more lives.

How can you help? Make a donation today - every penny counts! Please help us raise money for the life-saving mission of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital: Finding cures. Saving children.

How can you donate?

Visit my online fundraising site at <http://fundraising.stjude.org/goto/wendyanderson>, VenMo a donation to @Wendy-Anderson-611, mail a donation to 450 S Hall St, Roseville, IL 61473, or give me a call/send me a message and I'm happy to pick up a donation from you at your convenience. Thank you for supporting my 11th year running for St. Jude.

Thank you,

Wendy Anderson



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Ordinary Time

June 15 to November 23

The season of Easter comes to a close this next week on Pentecost Sunday. This celebration marks the day of the Holy Spirit rushing in with the gift of speaking many languages so the Gospel can be heard by all the nations—not just those who speak Hebrew or Greek.

Then comes what is called Ordinary Time. This isn't Ordinary like plain or boring. This is Ordinary, as in Ordinal—the fancy Latin word for numbers. We are just counting Sundays with this expression. And these Ordinals line up with specific lessons in the lectionary. So all who follow the lectionary can always know what lessons are appointed for the day based on what number Sunday in the year it is. It is wacky, it is slightly archaic, but it is our church calendar. Ordinary Time structures the long stretch of time between the seasons of Easter and Advent when the lectionary calendar starts all over again.

Ordinary Time is bookended with two special Sundays: Trinity Sunday and Christ the King Sunday. These days represent opportunities to celebrate ways we understand God and Jesus and the Spirit. Join us every Sunday in worship—Ordinary Time or not—to celebrate our shared faith.

Southwest Conference Prayer Calendar

Have you noticed in our prayers lately we have begun praying for neighboring ELCA Congregations and broader ELCA ministries? This is an intentional effort by our conference—the Southwest Conference of the Northern Illinois Synod. We are trying to remind each other of our partnership through these prayers and to strengthen our bonds.

In a time when every congregation is highly focused on its own needs, remembering we are connected to others is a helpful. Watch our FB page throughout the summer as we also begin posting our prayer calendar for our partners there as well.

Worship Guild Members

June 8 — Pentecost Sunday

Usher:	Steve Erlandson
Reader:	Julie Blaesing
Com Asst:	Gary Sanberg
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

June 15 — Trinity Sunday

Usher:	David Sandstrom
Reader:	Steve Erlandson
Com Asst:	Dee Dee Yez
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Carolyn Kellert

June 22 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Chip Algren
Reader:	Pam Van Kirk
Com Asst:	Kurt Volz
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Janice Algren

June 29 — Ordinary Time

Usher:	Dee Dee Yez
Reader:	Pam Best
Com Asst:	N/A
Narthex Host:	Linda McGuire
Musician:	Carolyn Kellert



Summer Newsletter Schedule

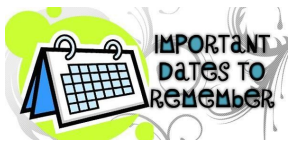
As we approach the summer, we will begin having newsletters twice a month. Worship videos will continue to be made available each week. We will have newsletters:

June 16

July 7, July 21

Aug 4, Aug 18

This summer schedule reflects Pastor's summer schedule and fewer ministry activities taking place over the summer.



Every Sunday

9:30 AM Fellowship Gathering

10:00 AM Worship



For corrections and updates, please call the Church office.

Sunday, June 1st—7th Easter Sunday

Sun, Jun 1 — 10 AM Baptism of Lewis Sanberg

11:15 AM Semi-Annual Meeting

Mon, Jul 2—9:30 AM Sarah Circle

7 PM Building/Grounds Committee

Wed, Jun 4—10 AM Bible Study

Sunday, June 8th—Pentecost Sunday

Tues, Jun 10 — 6 PM Council Picnic
at Pam Van Kirk's house

Thur, Jun 12 — 5 PM to 7 PM

Strawberry Festival

Fri, Jun 13 and 14 — 2 events

Synod Assembly

Community Care Days

Sunday, June 15th—Ordinary Time

Sun, Jun 15—Father's Day

Mon, Jun 16 (PM) to Sat, Jun 22

Pastor on Vacation

Sunday, June 22nd — Ordinary Time

Sun, Jun 22 — 11:15 AM Semi Annual Meeting

Mon, June 23—Mon, June 30

Pastor on Vacation

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



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

Jul 9 Cohen Anderson

Jul 9 Kris Champion

Jul 13 Reese Anderson

Jul 15 Pastor Jamie

Jul 17 Cecil Lovdahl

Jul 19 Mark Shrader

Jul 20 Ron Manuel

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



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

Jul 8 Tom & Pam Best

Jul 12 Steve & Karen

Erlandson

Jul 13 Kevin & Jennifer

Sprecher

Prayer Requests

Linda Ellison, Ila Roseberry, Kathi Cruce, Dean Sandstrom, Emily Agema, Cecil Lovdahl, Janet Lowe, Brian Elliott, Hannah Taylor, Wes Lovdahl, Kay Baily, Barb Rees

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



Vision and Purpose Giving

Throughout June, we will support Wendy Anderson's Run to Peoria, the fundraiser for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. See her letter earlier in this newsletter for more information from Wendy about this run.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital was founded in 1962 by entertainer Danny Thomas. It focuses on children's catastrophic diseases such as leukemia and other cancers. It prides itself on providing most of its medical care at no charge to the patient or the patient's family. As a designated nonprofit medical corporation, St. Jude relies on donations to cover its work, at a cost of nearly \$2 million a day.

We look forward to joining Wendy once again this year in supporting this wonderful health ministry. Blessings to Wendy as she trains and prepares for and then goes on this inspiring run.

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 Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. — Matthew 27:50

When we picture the death of Jesus, we picture the anguish, the blood, the sweat, the tears. We picture the soldier beneath the cross declaring "Truly this is the Son of God." We think about the women disciples standing nearby, and the crowds deriding Jesus. We recall the two thieves on crosses beside Jesus, one hearing the assurance he will be with Jesus in Paradise today. We think about darkness, and maybe even we think about the large tapestry in the Temple being torn in two. We picture all these things because we have four Gospel writers telling us different things about the moment Jesus died, capturing different vignettes of things happening. Each writer giving the story their own flair and theological details. And in our brain we bring it all together to make one complete story. We do this, because we are trying to make sense of the story. We are trying to process why four authors tell the same story in very different ways. And we do this because this is the foundational story to our faith and we want it to make sense. The process of wanting this story to make sense happens because we create in our minds a framework for understanding it. And with Bible stories, we tend to find the easiest harmonizing way to be our framework for understanding the big picture. We do this with Christmas as well—we harmonize the shepherds and the magi and the journey to Bethlehem and the escape to Egypt, even though the two Gospels that tell the story do not share any of the same details, except that Jesus is born to parents named Mary and Joseph.

Now in the same way we tend to harmonize our faith. We find patterns in faith issues that are the easiest to understand, and we try to apply the same patterns across all faith issues. And the easiest pattern for understanding faith is influenced most by our gender, ethnicity, social-economic status, and honestly, our political identity. In America right now, Christian thought is hugely impacted less by scripture and more by politicians who loudly promote certain views. And most often, we are not aware of how these influences form our theological thinking or form our responses to faith issues. The Theology of the Cross is one framework that helps us understand our faith. It begins with the central story of our faith—Jesus died on the cross. But this is not a harmonization of four Gospels. It is a particular lens through which we understand the death of Jesus using principles of God's grace and mercy and love and justice. It is a way of saying, certain passages of scripture and certain philosophical ideas and certain faith issues come together in a unique way at the Cross. And from this meeting point at the Cross, we begin to better understand why those same principles of God's grace and mercy and love and justice guide our faith journey in a particular way. It is just one framework. There are many others. But it is the framework that I use when I speak on matters of faith and how our Lutheran teachings inform us. Have you thought much about why you think about faith the way you do? You probably have a framework guiding you that you have not needed to articulate before. But learning to express why you think theologically as you do is as important as having the faith itself.

Peace, Pastor Jamie