

April 2023 Newsletter



Pastor Carlin's Page

Just who is my neighbor?

Luke 10:25-37 (ESV)

²⁵ And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷ And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸ And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii ^[a] and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will re-

pay you when I come back.' ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

I often tell people that words mean things. The words we say convey much of what we think and what we are trying to explain to others. However, sometimes the words we don't say or the things left out of our conversations can have just as much effect on meaning and sometimes even speak louder than words themselves. Yes, silence can be very loud.

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan the words of Jesus most certainly speak volumes, but perhaps what Jesus leaves out of the story may speak even more than his words.

Recently, our nation has faced much upheaval, hatred, violence and social unrest. Much of this upheaval has centered on race relations and justice issues spurred on by controversial police shootings in various regions of the country. Protests have sprung up in many cities across the United States and tensions are running high. In light of our current social and civil situation the question asked by the lawyer to Jesus in the Parable is more pertinent now than ever, "And who is my neighbor?"

The reply of Jesus to the lawyer is simply, "**A man** was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead." Christ is very nondescript about this man. Nothing identifies who this man is or what his socioeconomic status is or from what nationality he hales

or his possible religious affiliation or non-affiliation might be. In fact, we are given nothing or no-way to identify this man. You cannot even gain a clue about him from his clothing or his possessions as he was robbed, beaten and stripped naked. If ever there was a cold-case file pending on a criminal data base somewhere this would take the cake.

However, the nondescript nature of Jesus' description of the victim ("A man") is the real answer to the lawyer's question. Jesus was vague and generic for a reason, because any male victim could fit the description. Everybody is our neighbor that is the true answer. Regardless of whom we run across in life they are our neighbor.

In today's atmosphere we tend to look at each other as a member of a group and not as just a man or just a woman. Now we cannot help but notice our differences. It is impossible for me not to notice your skin color, your gender, or how you present yourself by your outer appearance. Like most, I notice even your facial expressions, posture, accent, handshake and other things that act as clues we all use to assess everyone and every situation. Call it profiling if you will but it is the reality of interpersonal interactions, it is reality whether we like it or not. After saying it is impossible for me or you to not notice our differences then how can we not let these factors and realities affect our sense of our neighbor. We cannot, however, there is a means this can be accomplished; it is only through the life changing power of Jesus Christ that this can be accomplished. Philippians 4: 13 says it this way, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." (ESV) Paul didn't write this about winning the Super Bowl or World Series but that we can overcome any situation as Disciples of Christ. Not enough to convince you? Ok, here we go. In Mathew 7 at the end of the "Sermon on the Mount" after Jesus gives us all a discourse on how to treat each other and a true dissertation on discipleship and what it takes and means to be a Christian, he adds this very misunderstood and most often taken out of context diatribe:

Matthew 7:1-14 (ESV)

⁷ "Judge not, that you be not judged. ²For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. ³Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

⁶"Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

⁷"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ⁹Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

¹²"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

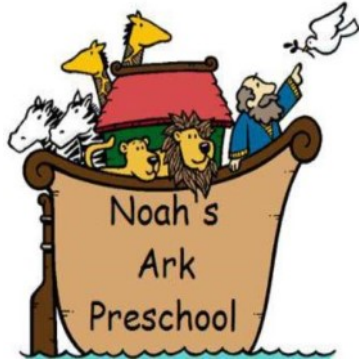
¹³"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy^[a] that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

Jesus wants us to look inwardly at ourselves and not outwardly at our neighbors. For if we all look inwardly we find the real problem does not lie with our neighbor but within ourselves. And contrary to popular belief the scripture of "ask, and it will be given, knock and it will be open" is not about God being our personal ATM machine. However, it does deal with receiving gifts but not worldly gifts of money, property or great health; no, it deals with heavenly gifts such as love, longsuffering, forgiveness, compassion, mercy, joy and all the truly important gifts God has for us.

Yes, our neighbor is everyone we encounter and we need to be indiscriminate with the love and gifts of God toward our neighbor. For more often than not the problem is not our neighbor but the man within.

Many blessings from our most relevant Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Pastor Carlin



April at Noah's Ark

We are so happy our new students are getting settled into our classroom! We are not adding more kiddos to this year's classroom since we only have about 1 month of school left! HOW CRAZY!! J We are getting ready to hold our annual Lottery for families that have pre-registered for next year! It is never to late to register or get information so please reach out at pontiacnoahsark@gmail.com

The 3-year-old classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:15-10:15 and 10:30-12:30.

The 4-year-old classes are held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:15-11:15 and 11:45-2:45.

The 3-year-old classroom has been doing St. Patrick's Day themed activities for the month, and our friends have loved it! We have utilized a lot of green and yellow colors into our classroom! They have worked on counting some dots on their shamrocks, and continuing with letter work! They had "gold" (dyed chickpeas) and green and yellow pom poms in the sensory table to utilize with their tongs and different fine motor tools. They also had the opportunity to use the molding clay to make anything their imaginations wanted!

Our 4 year olds have been working hard on writing their names without using their nametags in preparation for Kindergarten! Our 4 year olds have also been learning about St. Patrick's Day and leprechauns J. We have read lots of different St. Patrick's Day books. They have done lots of matching with Capital/lowercase letters, counting objects and listening for beginning sounds that match our letter of the week.

We have continued working on our Calendar binders, inside they trace the number for the day (which is our date), and they chart what our weather is outside that day! This helps them see data and which has more/less (sunny, cloudy, rainy, snowy or windy).

We have continued learning about our emotion. This helps our friends learn that it is okay to share when they have big feelings and that it is OKAY to have lots of emotions. We should talk about them with adults if we need to and they can help us, or give hugs if they want one. So often children are told to "stop crying", or children's feelings aren't validated because it isn't convenient but we feel as though we need to communicate to children that "big" feelings are okay (as long as we are not acting out hitting and kicking) and teach them how to regulate these emotions correctly!

Our primary goal is still to ensure the safety of our students; parents and teachers while at the same time promote a **positive and fun** preschool experience

Thank you for your support here at Noah's Ark!

Breanne Immke
Director of Noah's Ark Preschool

Please contact me at pontiacnoahsark@gmail.com for any questions!

Check out our Facebook page too!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Nursery through adult meets at 9:15 each Sunday.

COMFORTING (QUILTING) LADIES: has moved to Saturdays from 9 am—5 pm in the large Sunday School room downstairs. You don't have to come every Saturday and you are free to choose which hours are best for you (whatever fits your schedule) . Come first thing in the morning OR come just before lunch; work a while, take a lunch break; come back and work some more OR come to work later in the afternoon and then attend the 5:30 pm worship service. If you have any questions, please contact Lynnette @ 815/796-3216

ANNA CIRCLE: Will meet on Thursday, April 6, 2023, @ 1 pm in the Munson Room. We have begun a new Bible study entitled, "The Women of Easter: Encounter the Savior with Mary of Bethany, Mary of Nazareth, and Mary Magdalene". Visitors and new members are always welcome to join us on the 1st Thursday afternoon of each month. Questions—please call Lynnette @ 815/796-3216.

KNITWITS: *Knitwits has resumed on most Tuesdays from 9:30—11 am*

JOYFUL WOMEN: "A Guide to Prayer: Connecting with God", an 8-lesson program, has been chosen to be the new Bible study for Joyful Women. We will resume meeting on April 16th, and will continue on Sundays @ 6:30 pm as follows: 4/23, 4/30 and end on 5/7. Joyful Women is open to all ladies of First Lutheran, as well as their family and friends. Contact: Vicki Day @ 815/844-5420. or Sue Hiatt @ 815/844-7933 with questions

Please Note:

If you have submitted a name for the prayer list & would like them to receive a "Thinking of You" card, please provide the church office with a good address so that the volunteer coordinator can mail the card to the proper address.

Also, please update the office if/when the name on the prayer list can be removed (or any "address" changes).

Thank you.

~Beth Ray~





Thank you to all who have continued to generously donate food and supplies to the Livingston Area Food Pantry. The mission and social committee continues to monetarily support the pantry, especially during these difficult times when so many are unemployed and money is tight. During the month of **April** we would like to suggest:

Complete Pancake Mix (& syrup)

Peanut Butter (& Jelly)

Canned Meats (such as: Spam, chicken, etc.)

Laundry Detergent

Dish Soap

Toilet Paper

Paper Towels

Women's Feminine Products (including "pads" & tampons)

The pantry will accept **ALL** donations of **UNOPENED, NON-PERISHABLE** FOOD/SUPPLIES.

The pantry encourages us to purchase items inexpensively at Dollar Tree and Dollar General.

The church is open daily (M-F) from 8:00 am-3:30 pm. The grocery carts are located in the fellowship hall & by the ramp door, and are checked weekly so that I might make deliveries to assist in feeding our community members. I truly appreciate the support members of First Lutheran have given to our pantry for so many years. Bless you all for your generous and giving hearts!

~~Chris Lauritzen~~

VBS 2023

Unfortunately, I am unable to head up VBS in 2023; therefore, I am looking for someone who is willing to lead the important outreach ministry. I would be happy to assist whomever is willing to take it over. I have looked at the available kits and have found a simple one that will work for us. I have numerous documents available that I will share (they would save SO much time and energy for someone new to leading VBS). You will have an ample budget to work with and our congregation is extremely generous in sharing their time and talents. In addition, Concordia Supply Co. provides online registration.

Please prayerfully consider accepting the position of VBS director this summer. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Chris Lauritzen 815/674-5326

April Birthdays

Roberta Harms	4/1	Hayley Lucas	4/16	Dixie Vogel	4/28
Conner Johnson	4/2	Carlin Ours	4/16		
Steve Rapp	4/4	Reese Puryear	4/16		
Kathy Weber	4/6	Ashley Branz	4/17		
Sharon Carr	4/7	Tisha Harty	4/18		
Weiland Torkelson	4/8	Jim Robinston	4/18		
Annika VonHolten	4/8	Jayden Jones	4/20		
Bobbie Vogel	4/9	Steve Ray	4/20		
Maddie Myers	4/10	Meredith Diemer	4/21		
Jim Drengwitz	4/13	Peyton VonHolten	4/23		
Abbiegail Rapp	4/14	Megan Lawrence	4/24		
Gabriela Krueger	4/15	Serena VonHolten	4/26		
Durelle Pritchard	4/15	Ron Cox	4/28		
Jasmine Ray	4/15	Scott Doran	4/28		



2022/2023 CONFIRMATION CLASS

*There are 4 students in the 8th grade class and 5 students in the 7th grade class.
Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) is scheduled for 8 am on Palm Sunday (Apr. 2)*

REMINDER—If you wish to make a contribution to the church and are uncomfortable/unable to attend in person, you may mail it or drop it off between 8 am & 3:30 pm M-F.

ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOLES FOR SOULS....We plan to support this cause during the month of May only. Start saving those shoes!!

GOOD FRIDAY PRAYER VIGIL.....Good Friday Prayer Vigil starting at 8 p.m. on April 7.

Seder Re-enactment Meal Tuesday, April 4 @ 5:30 pm

Prayer Works



Please Pray for our Members & Friends:

Robbie Becker, Phyllis Bradley, Sharon Carr, Ron Cox, Patti Drenchwitz, Deb Follmer, Kerry Foster, Terri Heins, Carol Jones, Jim Jones, Jean Miller, Cindy Renzelman, Rupert & Cindy Rodriguez, Cheryl Weber, Stephen Weber, Andy Alvey, Cindi Arnold, Pastor Gabe Baumgardner, Jonathan Becker, Windy Birch, Betty Edwards, Katy Edwards, Marsha Follet-Pauly, Jeff Garretson, Pauline Gibson, Mike Gillispie, Katherine Harding, Wolf Knappe, Joni Koch, Owen Lyons, Jakob Miller, Rochelle Nolan, Michael O'Shea, Rick Ours, David Robinson, Chris Ross, Anita Sands, Gail Shaffer, Steve Shaffer, Kathy Telford, Gavin Wallace, John Winchester, John Wolf, Tim Woodard, & Pat & Jerry.

CHILDREN: Elliot Buchheit, Hudson Lanning, Lucy McKinley, & Jalene Woolford

Let us pray for the following members

Accolade: Phyllis Bradley

Evenglow Lodge:

Harley & Marian Mayer

Evenglow Inn: Delores Schultz

Goldwater Care (formerly Good Sam):

Ron Cox, & Maurine Kalkwarf

Homebound: Stephen Weber & Jim Jones

HIPAA Laws...Because of the HIPAA Laws, if you would like the Pastor to visit you in the hospital, **you must call the church office** (or have the Chaplain at the hospital call the office).

Meetings in April

Mondays, Apr. 3 & 17 @ 9:15 am
Bible Study @ The Pointe

Mondays, Apr. 3 & 17 @ 6:30 pm
Euchre

Saturdays from 9 am—5 pm
Comforting Ladies (Quilters)

Thursdays @ 6 pm
Choir

Sunday, Apr. 2 @ 9:15 am
Property Committee

Monday, Apr. 3 @ 6:30 pm
Noah's Ark Placement Lottery

Tuesday, Apr. 4 @ 5:30 pm
Seder Meal Re-enactment

Thursday, Apr. 6 @ 1 pm
Anna Circle

Thursday, Apr. 6 @ 7 pm
Maudy Thursday Service

Friday, Apr. 7 @ 7 pm
Good Friday Service

Frida, Apr. 7 @ 8 pm—Saturday, Apr.8 @ 5 pm
Prayer Vigil

Saturday, Apr. 8 @ 10 am
Easter Egg Hunt

Tuesday, Apr. 11 @ 7 pm
Church Council

Sunday, Apr. 16, 23 & 30 @ 6:30 pm
Joyful Women

Saturday, Apr. 22 @ 3 pm
Blessing of the Motorcycles—FLC Parking Lot

Sunday, Apr. 23 @ 9:15 am
Estate Planning Presentation

Monday, Apr. 24 @ NOON
Newsletter Deadline

Friday, Apr. 28 @ 9 am
Newsletter Assembly

Sunday, Apr. 30 following each service
Rogation Service

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ATTENTION PARENTS & FAMILIES

Please send the names of your graduates (8th grade, high school, college) to the office (or call the church). Recognition of graduates is currently scheduled for the services of May 6th & 7th.

Thank you and congratulations to all graduates!



Thank You! For Sponsoring Our 2023



Orlando & Frances Becker
In memory of the Becker Family

Demi Carlson
In memory of Donna Myer

Carlson Family
In memory of Samuel D. Carlson

Gene Coriell
In memory of Chris Coriell

Ellis Diemer
In memory of Carol Diemer

Al & Charlene Fahsbender
In honor of children & grandchildren
Lisa & Chris Landstrom, Julianne & Kristin
Scott & Heather Fahsbender, Brynne & Hunter

Al & Charlene Fahsbender
In memory of parents
Glen & Eleanor Dobbs
Bob & Eileen Fahsbender

Brian & Sherry Friedman
In memory of Greg Voigts

Larry & Dawn Graves
In memory of Richard & Beverly Harder

Karol Hall
In honor of my wonderful Sunday School class

Karol Hall
In memory of my dear husband, Bill Hall

Karol Hall
In memory of our parents
Edward & Gladys Carls
Will & Grace Hall

Karol Hall, Dee Dee Raube, Roger Carls
In memory of our sister, Cheri Carls Gibbons

Mildred Harms
In memory of Willis Harms

Mildred Harms
In memory of Greg Harms

Roger & Donna Henkel
In honor of blessings received

MaryAnn & Rick Johnson
In memory of our parents
Bernadine & Harold Johnson
Lois Abels
Merlyn Abels

Mary Ann & Rick Johnson
In memory of brothers Alvin & Norm Abels

Mary Ann & Rick Johnson
In memory of grandparents
Bill & Emma Vollmer

Kelly & Mary Lou Jones
In memory of sister Shirley Hendershot

Rick & Candy Jones
In memory of our parents
Kelly & Betty Jones
Gene & Clara Ruther

Nancy LoPiccalo
In memory of Marion & Helen Rigg
In memory of Phil LoPiccalo

Nancy LoPiccalo
In honor of U McCullough Family
In honor of Owen Williams Family

Gene & Sharrie Orendorff
In honor of our children, grandchildren, &
great-grandchildren

Gene & Sharrie Orendorff
In memory of our parents
Lyle & Dorothy Orendorff
Clarence & Ada Peasley

Jim & Eileen Robinson
In honor of all loved ones

Jim & Eileen Robinson
In memory of son Michael
In memory of brother "Willy"

Joyce Ruff
In memory of Mike Ruff

Carl & Sandy Schade
In memory of loved ones

Shirley Trainor
In memory of Donald Trainor

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Please plan to attend and be sure to invite others to attend our Lenten and Easter services in March and April. The schedule will be as follows:

Wednesdays, March 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29

5:30 pm meal

Bible Study @ 6 pm

April 2 - Palm Sunday

Regular Services w/Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) at the 8:00 am service
(Cake reception during Fellowship time)

April 4 - Holy Week Tuesday

6:30 pm Seder Re-enactment meal

April 6 - Maundy Thursday -

7 pm service

April 7 - Good Friday –

7 pm Service

9 pm – Prayer Vigil begins

April 8, Saturday

Easter Egg Hunt @ 10 am

Easter Service @ 5:30 pm

April 9, Sunday

Easter Services @ 8 and 10:30 a.m.

Come join the fun every other Monday night



Mark your calendars for the first and third Mondays of the month. Spread the word. .

We will open doors at 6 pm, play begins at 6:30 pm. Cost is \$4/person

We want everyone who attends to feel safe and comfortable. Please do not attend if you do not feel well . If there are any questions, please direct them to Fred Shirley.

Apr 3 & 17 May 1 & 15 June 5 & 19 July 3 & 17

HOW TO WATCH OUR CHURCH SERVICES ONLINE:

YOUTUBE: www.firstlutheranyoutube.org

You can also subscribe to our YouTube channel by going to YouTube and searching for "Pontiac First Lutheran"

OUR CHURCH WEBSITE: <https://firstlutheranpontiac.org/live-stream/>

APPLE TV & ROKU: *Download an app called "Box Cast" and search for a channel called "Pontiac First Lutheran" Once you find it, make it one of your favorites and you can watch from your tv or phone!*

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pontiacfirstlutheran/>

Go to this link and request to be added to the group. Once you are added you will get notifications of our next service and see past services!

TWITTER: <https://twitter.com/FirstPontiac>

If you have the twitter app, search for "First Pontiac" and you can 'follow' us on Twitter!



First Lutheran Church
Worshiping Christ - Serving Our Neighbor



Nonprofit Org.
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PONTIAC, IL 61764**

Phone: 815-844-3695

Fax: 815-844-7580

Email: info@firstlutheranpontiac.org

Pastor Carlin: carlinours@gmail.com

704/775-9823

www.firstlutheranpontiac.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**APRIL
2023**

“Worshiping Christ, Serving Our Neighbor”

Weekend Worship Schedule

Sat. 5:30 pm

Sun. 8:00 am

Sun. 10:30 am

Sunday School 9:15 am

Our Staff

Pastor: Carlin Ours
Office Admin: Beth Ray
Acct: Angel Hall
Custodian: DeAnn Dennis
Vol. Coord: Beth Ray
Choir Dir: Joseph Durbin

2023 Congregational Council:

Jim Drengwitz, President	Jeff Bressner
Michael Carlson, V. President	Christine Brown
Cathy Robinson, Secretary	Elizabeth Diemer
Steve Ray, Treasurer	Al Fahsbender
Michelle Janssen, Fin. Secretary	MaryAnn Johnson
Stewart Alvey	Julie Rapp