
March 2023 Newsletter



Pastor Carlin's Page

One of the first questions ever posed in seminary to me and my classmates was, "How is a first century Palestinian Jew named Jesus relevant today?" I cannot remember who asked this question; however, it is one that as a pastor I must keep in mind at all times. Though, I would add that this question is just as poignant to all who are followers of Christ.

I think perhaps the relevance of Jesus to us today can be found in his humanity. Yes, Jesus is Emanuel (God with us), but he is also a human just like us as well. We cannot separate the divinity of Jesus from his humanity. He is God's perfect man and man's perfect God all rolled up in one. My theology professor Doctor Frank Tupper of Wake Forest University School of Divinity put it this way to us. "Jesus Christ is the contradiction to the contradiction." When you consider this it makes perfect sense. The first contradiction is that God is not a human; however, Jesus breaks this rule by coming to us as a babe in a manger, thus, the first contradiction. Secondly, you cannot kill God. However, Jesus Christ being the God in the flesh is executed as a common criminal I might add, thereby, fulfilling the second contradiction. This type of theological musing is fascinating but still does not resolve the question at hand, "How is a first century Palestinian Jew named Jesus relevant today?"

Of course, we must admit the primary way Jesus is relevant. His sacrifice upon the cross redeemed us from our fallen sinful state and retuned us once again into relationship with God The Father. As part of this we are now righteous only through Christ's merits and now live in the promise of eternal life and resurrection hope. This is relevance squared in my humble opinion.

The question seems to be aimed in a more precise way at life in general. As a matter of fact most ministries today appear to focus solely on this aspect of Jesus' relevance. Many false assumptions and teachings such as "Word of Faith, and The Prosperity Gospel" have become all too prevalent as a means to make Jesus relevant to modern day folks. "Praise and end time's ministries have also had a large impact on trying to make Christ more relevant but fall short by leaps and bounds.

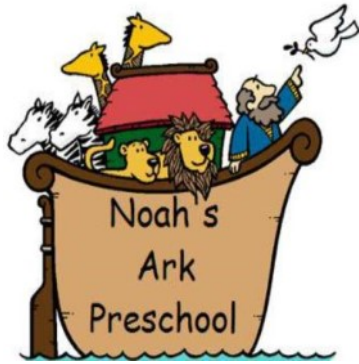
The answer to the relevance of Jesus to us today can be found in His life and teachings. First of all He offers us new life in Him, or to be Born Again. The term Born Again has truly been taken out of context in much of Christianity. It has become a label of salvation but that is not the total new life Christ was discussing with Nicodemus. To be "Born of the Spirit" is to be one who follows Christ in spirit and truth. They are no longer followers of their own path but have been transformed by Jesus into new individuals (Born Again) living and following after Christ in ever fiber of their being. (John 3:1-15.)

The relevance of Jesus does not stop there. He goes beyond and above the call of duty as He is with us on every step of our life journey. Through the good, the bad, and the indifferent Christ is present helping us through our lowest lows and our highest highs. Jesus is a God who has suffered and had joys. So as such, He understands our sufferings and our joys. For he has experienced them in His own way as a human being on this earth, He is not a detached divinity living on the outer cusps but is a God who is "Closer than any brother." He weeps for His friend Lazarus. He knows betrayal by friends and family. He knows mental anguish. He knows physical and mental suffering. Finally, He knows what it is to die and to be resurrected.

"How is a first century Palestinian Jew named Jesus relevant today?" So many ways we could never count or name them all. However, His relevance is just as real today as it has been for the last 2000 years and will be into infinity.

Many blessings to each of you from our most relevant Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Pastor Carlin



March at Noah's Ark

We have had 3 NEW students that we have added to our 3-year-old classroom! We still have room for more students, in the 4-year-old PM class and 3-year-old MIDS so please tell your family and friends, we can add students any time during the school year!

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 Valentine and heart themed activities this month! They have been hard at work continuing to learn the letters of the alphabet and focusing on the letters specifically in their name. The class has also worked on counting hearts and correlating the numbers to the amount of hearts they have.

Our 4 year olds have been working hard on writing their names without using their nametags in preparation for Kindergarten! They have mastered much of the alphabet already! The 4 year olds have also loved all of our different Valentine activities! They have enjoyed the red, pink, purple, and white pom pom balls in the sensory table! They have used different cups and tongs to pick them up and make various coffee items.

We have read lots of different Valentine books, and they have done lots of matching with Capital/ lowercase letters and writing them.

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 also been learning about our emotions with our emoji dice during circle time at the end of the day. 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, March 2, 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". We will continue our study of Chapter 1, Lost in His Love (pages 5-19) and study guide (pages 196-197). Anna Circle and Quilting Ladies will be providing the Wednesday evening meal on March 22nd. We will make plans for the meal during our business meeting. 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 resumed meeting on February 19th, and will continue on Sundays @ 6:30 pm as follows: 2/26, 3/5/3/12, break for Easter and resume for 4/16, 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 **March** 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

March Birthdays

Roger Becker	3/4	Finley Lawrence	3/20
Nancy Fienhold	3/4	Kellin Ours	3/21
Lyle Leach	3/4	Julie Ahern	3/22
Dee Dee Raube	3/5	Larry Graves	3/22
Deborah Follmer	3/7	Michelle Janssen	3/22
Carl Schade	3/7	Blair Barton	3/24
Trina Whittle	3/9	Amanda Krueger	3/24
Tina Barton	3/14	Brooks Lawrence	3/26
Marlon Eilts	3/16	Dave Morgan	3/26
Caryl Barling	3/17	Shirley Trainor	3/28
Taylor Harty	3/18	Trevor Brown	3/29
Debra Crull	3/20	Mary Ann Hill	3/31



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

LENTEN MEALS—will return for 2023. Meals will be served on Wednesdays in March and will begin at 5:30 pm, then a short Bible study will take place at approximately 6 pm and will conclude in time for Confirmation class to convene at 7 pm.

March 1 = Council; March 8 = Sunday School teachers; March 15 = Youth Group;
March 22 = Quilters/Anna Circle & March 29 = Choir

Prayer Works



Please Pray for our Members & Friends:

Robbie Becker, Phyllis Bradley, Sharon Carr, Ron Cox, Patti Drengwitz, Deb Follmer, Kerry Foster, Kori Harder, Terri Heins, Mary Ann Johnson, Carol Jones, Jim Jones, Jean Miller, Durelle & Marilyn Pritchard, Rupert & Cindy Rodriguez, Cheryl Weber, Stephen Weber, 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, Stacy Nutgrass, Michael O'Shea, David Robinson, Chris Ross, Anita Sands, Gail Shaffer, Steve Shaffer, Kathy Telford, John Winchester, John Wolf, Tim Woodard, & Pat & Jerry. **C**

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

Let us pray for the following members

Accolade: Phyllis Bradley

Evenglow Lodge:

*Harley & Marian Mayer, &
Jim Jones*

Evenglow Inn: Delores Schultz

The Pointe: Maurine Kalkwarf

*Goldwater Care (formerly Good Sam):
Ron Cox, & Mary Ann Johnson*

Homebound: Stephen Weber

Meetings in March

Mondays, Mar. 6 & 20 @ 9:15 am
Bible Study @ The Pointe

Mondays, Mar. 6 & 20 @ 6:30 pm
Euchre

Wednesdays @ 5:30 pm
Lenten Meals
3/1 = Council
3/8 = Sunday School Teachers
3/15 = Youth Group
3/22 = Quilters/Anna Circle
3/29 = Choir

Wednesdays @ 7 pm
Confirmation

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

Thursdays @ 6 pm
Choir

Thursday, Mar. 2 @ 1 pm
Anna Circle

Sunday, Mar. 5 & 12 @ 6:30 pm
Joyful Women

Saturday, Mar. 11 @ 7 pm
Grandview University Choir

Sunday, Mar. 12 @ 2 am—TIME CHANGE
Sunday, Mar. 12—DEADLINE TO ORDER LILIES

Monday, Mar. 13 @ 6:30 pm
Memorial Committee

Tuesday, Mar. 14 @ 7 pm
Church Council

Tuesday, Mar. 21 @ 7 pm
Worship Committee

Monday, Mar. 27 @ NOON
Newsletter Deadline

Monday, Mar. 27 @ 7 pm
Mission/Social Committee

Friday, Mar. 31 @ 9 am
Newsletter Assembly

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).

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Comforting (Quilting) Ladies..

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GRANDVIEW UNIVERSITY CHOIR PRESENTATION

On Saturday, March 11, 2023, the choir from Grandview University (Des Moines, IA) will be in town to present a concert at First Lutheran Church. The concert will be open to the public and the choir will accept a free-will offering that evening. Any proceeds go toward defraying tour expenses and toward furthering the choir's work at the University.

Additionally, the choir members and directors are looking for "host" families for the evening. The members are in pairs that the directors wish to keep housed together, the directors can be separate (except the married couple) & can also stay with one of the pairs if someone has room. Two pairs need a location with no cats, one pair needs no dogs, and another pair needs gluten-free/no bananas. If you have space to help the choir out for one night, please contact either Pastor Ours or the office for further information.

We look forward to this special music.

2023 OFFERING ENVELOPES...are available in the East transept

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

CONFIRMATION (AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM)...is planned for Sunday, April 2nd, 2023 (Palm Sunday) at the 8 am service

GOOD FRIDAY PRAYER VIGIL.....Please sign up for the Good Friday Prayer Vigil starting at 9 p.m. on April 7. A sign-up sheet will be passed in March.



March 12, 2023

Seder Re-enactment Meal

Tuesday, April 4

6:30 pm

Watch for sign-up sheet

40 seats only

Water Mission Lenten Mission Project

The Mission/Social Committee has selected Water Mission as our Lenten mission project. Water Mission is a Christian engineering nonprofit that designs, builds, and implements water, sanitation, and hygiene solutions that transform lives. As a designated mission partner of the NALC, we will be collecting funds to send to Water Mission. We will *begin* this project on **Ash Wednesday** and *complete* it on **Palm Sunday, March 2**.

Globally, 2.2 billion people lack access to clean, safe water, and 4.2 billion people throughout the world lack access to adequate sanitation. One person dies every 37 seconds from water-related illnesses. Clean water, an essential part of life which is so readily available from our nearest faucet, is a precious commodity in so many parts of the world.

Headquartered in North Charleston, South Carolina, Water Mission was formed in 2001. Since then, their organization has served 57 countries and over 7 million people by building safe water, sanitation, and hygiene solutions in developing countries, refugee camps and disaster areas all over the world. Their endeavors and charity work have earned them a top four-star rating by Charity Navigator 15 years in a row. In 2022, the average person in the United States consumed 42.9 gallons of soft drinks per year and an additional 46.8 gallons of bottled water! Yet, the global water crisis continues with billions of people who have no choice but to drink contaminated water.

The water crisis is solvable, and Water Mission is saving lives through safe water and sanitation solutions. Their vision is that all people have access to safe water and an opportunity to experience God's love.

With our monetary support of Water Mission, we will enable them to

- Deliver safe water solutions to men, women, and children around the world
- Equip local leaders to operate, maintain, and manage safe water systems
- Help communities break the cycle of poverty through sustainable access to safe water
- Build education and economic security for generations to come.

Your support of this worthy project will help to change lives. Envelopes are located in the pews for your donation. When writing a check, please indicate Water Mission on the memo line. As always, thank you for your consideration, generosity, and support of this worthy cause.



EASTER LILIES

We would again like to decorate the sanctuary with Easter Lilies for Easter morning. The names of those providing Easter lilies will be included in our Easter bulletin. You may also designate a lily in honor of or in memory of a loved one.

If you would like to order a lily, please fill out this form and place it (and your payment) in the offering plate or turn it in to the church office **BEFORE March 12th.** Cost of a plant is \$15.00

Name _____

Number of lilies desired _____

In Honor Of _____

In Memory Of _____



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.

EASTER EGG HUNT!



The members of First Lutheran Church invite all children ages three through fifth grade, from our church and Noah's Ark to an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8 at 10:00 a.m. Please bring your own basket.

We would greatly appreciate your help with donations such as inexpensive prizes, *Easter candy*, or CASH donations. Please have your donations at the church by Friday, March 31.

Easter Egg Hunt Sign-Up

To give us an idea of how many to plan for, please fill out this form and return it to the church office by Sunday, April 2.

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

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.

Mar 6 & 20 Apr 3 & 17 May 1 & 15 June 5 & 19

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.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Pontiac, IL
Permit 108

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
311 W GROVE
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



**MARCH
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