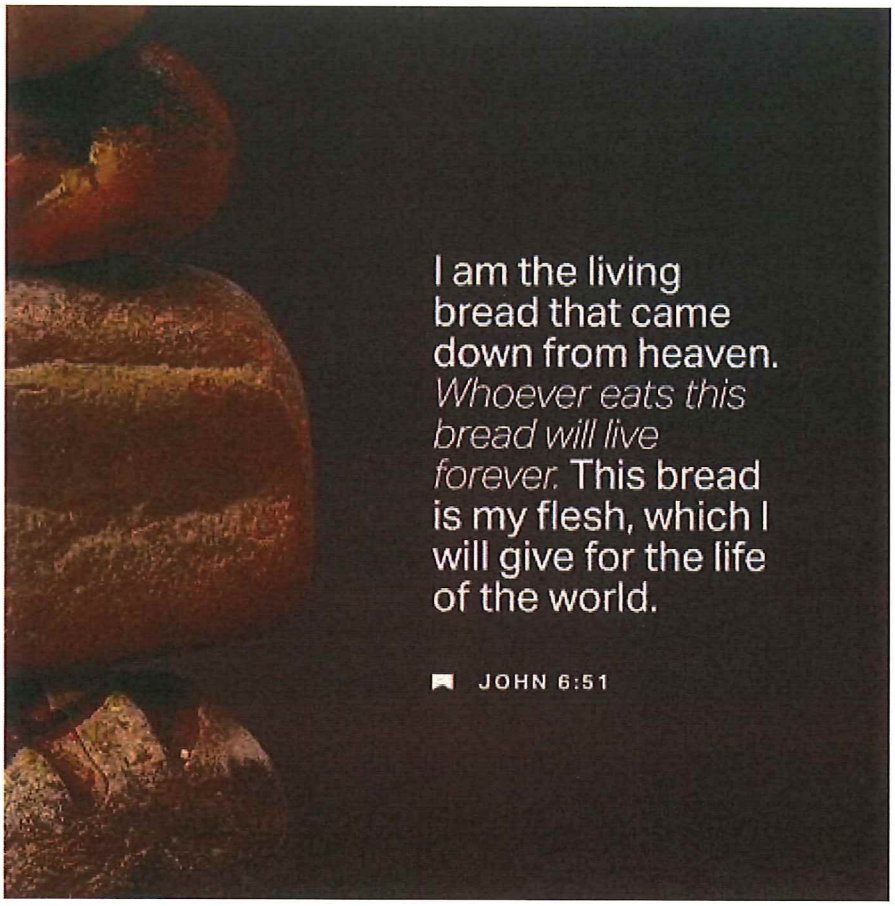
FIRST NEWS

First Lutheran Church
Freeport, IL 61032

Through worship and loving service,
We make Christ known to all

Volume 53 #8 *August 2026*

God invites all who are hungry or thirsty to receive food and drink without cost. Jesus feeds the hungry multitude and reveals the abundance of God. At the eucharistic table, we remember all who are hungry or poor in our world today. As we share the bread of life, we are sent forth to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry.



Caregivers give emotional support when a member is in need. If you know of anyone who could benefit from a caregiver's visit, don't hesitate to get in touch with Bev Herrling at (815) 235-4225 or the church office at (815)235-9790

MESSAGES FROM THE PASTOR

This evening, I am sitting at the table with my computer open and a printout from Ghost Ranch. I am about to embark on an eight-day adventure to Abiquiu, New Mexico. It is a continuing education event, and I will be traveling there and back on an Amtrak train.

Saturday and Sunday will be travel days, and Monday through Thursday will be learning days, and Friday and Saturday will be travel days back, with hopefully enough brain capacity to lead worship the next day at First.

Many times, individuals wonder what their pastor does or learns on these trips. Let me share with you some of the sessions and workshops. There is a possibility that you might be thinking that sounds boring, BUT I am stoked.

Matt Skinner preaching on Revelation 5:1-10

Morning Prayers

Plenary: Preaching in a Too Much, Too Soon, Too Fast World

Workshop: Preaching the Gospel's Parables

Unstructured Conversation with Leaders

Plenary: Biblical Authority in an Age of Authoritarianism

Plenary: Preaching as Resistance
Workshop: How-To's for Navigating Homiletical Hurdles

Cody Sanders preaching on Matthew 13:33

Workshop: Preaching Matthew During Year A
Plenary: Preaching Hope Without Optimism

Karoline Lewis preaching on Matthew 14:22-33

12 times that will challenge my mind. Then I also look forward to the opportunity to pick colleagues' brains over our meals and possibly getting a hike or two in. If any of those pique an interest, let me know, and I will make sure I take notes :)

UPCOMING BIBLE STUDY

There are so many great studies out there, it is tough to pick the one(s) that may be a "hit" for the church. Last year, we tried to reach a wide range of topics.

One of the most challenging but fruitful conversations that we had was Amy-Jill Levine's book and DVD The Bible With and Without Jesus.

She is coming out with a new book (and DVD) in August, and we are going to put her book and DVD on the Thursday (6 p.m.) evening docket for our first series (Get Home or Choir). We often shy away from the Old Testament. Let's jump in and begin from the beginning (Genesis).

Genesis: A Beginner's Guide to the Beginning invites readers into the foundational stories of the Old Testament with clarity, depth, and imagination. Amy-Jill Levine presents Genesis as a living text, one that continues to shape faith, identity, and our understanding of what it means to be human. These familiar stories are often heard in fragments; here, they are explored with care, curiosity, and theological insight.

With her signature blend of historical context and engaging storytelling, Levine opens up the book of beginnings, attending to its beauty, tensions, and enduring questions. She invites readers to linger with stories of creation and responsibility, rivalry and loss, judgment and mercy, promise and perseverance, revealing how these ancient narratives still speak with power today.

This study explores key stories from Genesis. Lessons Include:

September 10: The Garden of Eden
September 17: Cain and Abel
September 24: Noah's Ark
October 1: The Near Sacrifice of Isaac
October 8: Jacob's Stairway to Heaven
October 15: Joseph's Saga

Whether you are encountering Genesis for the first time or returning with fresh questions, this book offers a thoughtful and inviting companion. Levine does more than explain what happens in these stories. She shows why they matter, bridging ancient Scripture and modern life and inviting readers to engage the book of beginnings with wisdom and wonder.

WORSHIP

Sunday Bible Study- The Sunday morning adult study group meets on Sunday mornings following worship. This is a relaxed group of people who are interested in learning. Everyone is welcome.

Streaming – Sunday morning services are available to watch live on Facebook at 9:00 a.m. You can view this by clicking on or typing in this address: https://www.facebook.com/firstlutheranfreeport. Once you are on the page, you must click on the video. If you cannot watch us live at 9:00 a.m., you can view the recorded version of the service at the same link or by going to the First Lutheran website www.firstlutheranfreeport.org. If you watch it on the website, scroll to the bottom of the home page and choose the service you want to view. New to our online presence. After a four-year hiatus, Pastor Jeff has brought back our YouTube page and is posting daily videos. You can view them on our YouTube page: https://www.youtube.com/@firstlutheranchurchfreeport.

Ushers / Greeters Needed – We need your help. Ushering/greeting is such an important but easy job. No experience is necessary. We currently have open dates for August. The sign-up sheet is on the 3-tiered stand in the Galena St. glass door entrance. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Assisting Ministers – Assisting ministers are needed. No experience necessary, and no canting is required. If you would like to join our group of assisting ministers, please contact Judy Kaufman or the church office.

Noisy Offering – The second Sunday of each month, we will be taking up a noisy offering. Bring in your change and make some noise putting it into the bucket. All noisy offering money will be donated to a different worthy charity each month. For July, we collected $92.44. This money was delivered to the Voices. The August noisy offering will be on August 9th, and the money will be donated to FACC. We appreciate your participation.

Blessing of the Backpacks – Students and teachers of all ages are invited to bring their backpacks to worship on Sunday, August 16th. Pastor Jeff will bless the backpacks during worship. What a wonderful way to start the school year.

Confirmation - As we look into the Fall, we are looking at our Confirmation programming. Before we carve anything into the calendar, we are needing to see what students are wanting to be part of confirmation and have their baptism affirmed in an Affirmation of Baptism service. When we have the names of students (families) who are interested, we will have an informational meeting and share the different pathways that we can choose. This will include possibilities of instruction time, fellowship activities, and service projects. Days/Times are also up for discussion. Please contact the pastor if you are interested or having any questions. Phone (330) 234-1317. Email: pastoroffirst@gmail.com by Sunday, August 16th.

August Worship Volunteers				
Date	**Altar Guild**	**Usher**	**Reader**	**Assisting Minister**
August 2	June Brandt & Esther Eden	Volunteers Needed	Judy Kaufman	Sharon Wall
August 9	Brad & Rochelle Heilman	Tina Chamberlin & Gail Diehl	Judy Kaufman	Barb Statdfield
August 16	Steve & Nancy Olson	Volunteers Needed	Judy Kaufman	Dena Kampmier
August 23	Steve & Nancy Olson	Volunteers Needed	Judy Kaufman	Judy Kaufman
August 30	Roger & Dena Kampmier	Volunteers Needed	Judy Kaufman	Dena Kampmier

Teachers Needed - We need people to assist in teaching for the 2026 / 2027 school year. Please prayerfully consider helping out in this much-needed ministry to our youth. If you have any questions regarding this, feel free to contact Pastor Jeff or Jan Butterfield.

PLEASE INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

Members and Friends who need extra prayers – Donna & Marvin Beyer, Sarah Lower Borstad, Judy Brady, Lauren Diehl, Linda Donmeyer, Laith Dougherty, Mckinley France, Mary Lee Gerbode, Connie Gogel, Ryan Griffith, Gail Harris, Terri Hawes, Sharon Janicke, Stephanie Kohl, Jordan Larson, Bob Last, Joann LeBaron, Beth Luke, Kevin Madsen, Kay Mammoser, Raymond Marschang, Mary Meier, John Moore, Dave & Carol Netherland, Bob Neuendorf, Gary Ogren, Noni Payne, Reuben Pearson, Ellie Joy Q, Sue Sellen, Vic Shields, Betty Simler, Gary Statdfield, Brian Toepher, Caleb Wallace, Corrine Wallace, Stan Ward, Kathy Wilkin, Gail & Bob Willis, and Steve Wise.

Members and Friends who need skilled care – Dee Burstrom, Harriett Gustason, JoAnn Kohn, Marilyn Ruthe, Jean Sorn, Jennifer Stees, and Ruth Wardlow

Military & First Responders – Military Personnel: Tyler Kennan, Jayce Kohn, Owen McVicker, Jeff Meiborg, Kaydin Rabey, Madison Scace, and Derrik Triem. First Responders: Officer Daniel Moore, Detective Tony Bradbury, and Officer Josh Garrett. Fire Fighter/EMT: Taylor Ramsey.

ACTIVITIES

Supper on Galena & Jackson – The next Supper on Jackson and Galena will be held on Sunday, September 6th at 6:00 p.m. Watch for more details.

Luther N Brew – The Luther N Brew group will meet on August 4th at Cannova's, 1101 W Empire St., Freeport, at 6:30 p.m. All men are welcome, and no reservation is required.

Saturday Morning Bible Study – Every Saturday morning at 7:30, a group from First Lutheran gathers at Amigo's restaurant, 306 N. Galena Ave., for breakfast and bible study. The group studies the lessons for the upcoming Sunday. Everyone is welcome to join. For questions, please contact Bob Neuendorf.

WELCA

Bunko - The monthly Bunko group will gather on Thursday, August 20th from 1:00-3:00 pm in the Martin Luther Room. No reservations are needed, and beginners are always welcome. The game is easy to learn! Come on down and bring a friend.

Knitting Group - The knitting group will meet on August 1st & 15th at 10:00 a.m. at the Wall of Yarn shop on Stephenson Street. Come join us and bring a project of your choice to knit or crochet. We are looking for people to knit prayer shawls and prayer squares. If you would like to help with this ministry, we have a supply of yarn and patterns you may use. Just contact Jan Butterfield or Bev Herrling for more information.

Project Day - Project Day meets on the second Thursday each month. Next month we will gather on August 13th from 10:00-3:00 p.m. in the Martin Luther Room. We can always use large pieces of material and bedsheets for quilt backings for Lutheran World Relief and for lap robes. Donations may be left in the WELCA bin next to the mailboxes. You are welcome to come for part or all of the day. Bring your lunch if you plan to stay over the noon hour.

School Kits - WELCA is collecting supplies for School Kits for Lutheran World Relief. The kits are given to children when they are displaced from their homes and schools due to natural disasters, to refugee camps, etc. Kits are distributed in the United States and throughout the world, wherever there is a need. Items needed include: 70-page spiral notebooks, 24-pack crayons, unsharpened pencils, and black or blue pens. A Thrivent Action Team gift card has been used to purchase other items needed. Donations may be left in the bin in the entryway or in the hallway near the mailboxes.

OTHER NEWS

World Hunger Sunday - World Hunger Sunday is on July 26th, and next month it will be on August 30th. Donations received during Fellowship time will be sent to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. You may also place donations in the offering plate anytime during worship by using a World Hunger envelope found in the pew. Checks should be made payable to First Lutheran Church, and we will send in one check for all donations received. Thank you for your support of this program, which addresses hunger issues throughout the world.

FACC – For July, we were asked to collect cans of soup. We set a goal of 100 items, and we surpassed that. CONGRATULATION!!! That is very exciting. For August, we have been asked to collect canned vegetables. I think we are on a roll and we should raise our goal to 125 cans for August. As always, please put them in the bin near the coat racks. First Lutheran is so full of generous people. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

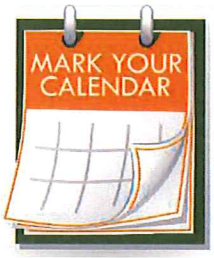
Coffee Hour Treats – We currently have a treat sign-up sheet for Sunday morning coffee hour. If you are interested in providing treats, please sign up or contact Bob Neuendorf for more information.

The Community Ministry Committee is helping a family find a good used car. Email Shannon Thruman if you have any leads. shannonthruman@gmail.com.

The deadline for the September issue of First News is Thursday, August 20th. Any and all information is appreciated. (New baby, special event, new address, activities, etc.).

June Attendance		
Date	Sunday 9:00	Facebook Live
June 7	62	193
June 14	57	167
June 21 – Father's Day	59	204
June 28	45	277
Total	**223**	**841**

June Financials		
	Current Month	Year to Date
Total Income	$16,377.42	$125,818.42
Total Expenses	$23,921.16	$145,244.43
Income Less Expenses	**-$7,543.74**	**-$19,426.01**



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

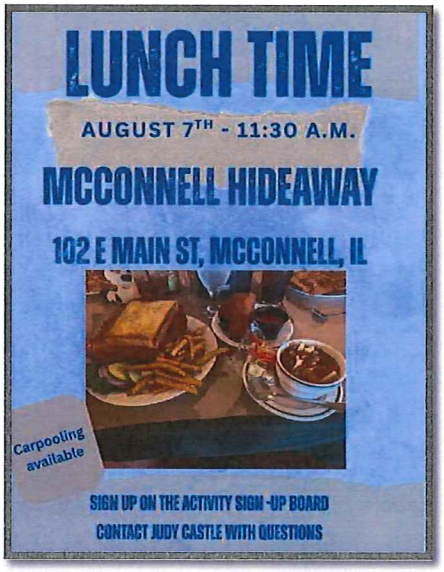
September 6th – Supper on Galena & Jackson
September 10th – Bible Study Starts
September 10th – Choir Resumes
September 13TH – God's Work Our Hands
September 13th – Grandparents Day
September 22nd – Ladies Circle resumes

More information on these events will be available in the September Newsletter.

JULY REMINDERS

- World Hunger Sunday is July 26th.

Joan Clair Schulz 1945 - 2026
May God grant peace to her memory, comfort to her family and grace to us all as we seek to live our lives to His glory.



August 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 7:30 Bible Study 10:00 Knitting 12:00 NA
2 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study Home Communion	3 7:00 Boy Scouts	4 12:00 NA 6:30 Luther N Brew	5 6:30 NA	6 6:00 Worship Meeting	7 11:30 Lunch @ McConnell Hideaway 6:30 NA	8 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA
9 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study Noisy Offering	10 6:00 Evangelism 7:00 Boy Scouts	11 12:00 NA 1:00 Caregivers	12 6:00 Council 6:30 NA	13 10:00 Project Day	14 6:30 NA	15 7:30 Bible Study 10:00 Knitting 12:00 NA
16 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study Blessing of Backpacks	17 7:00 Boy Scouts	18 12:00 NA	19 6:30 NA	20 1:00 Bunko First News Info Due	21 6:30 NA	22 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA
23 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study	24 7:00 Boy Scouts	25 12:00 NA First News Sent	26 6:30 NA	27	28 6:30 NA	29 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA
30 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study World Hunger Sunday	31 7:00 Boy Scouts					

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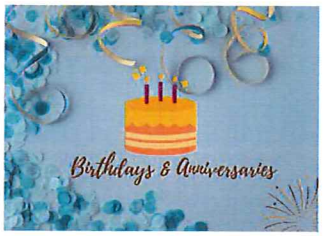

August Birthday's					
8/3	Susan Fago Tim Lovell	8/12	Roger Kampmier Betsey Lashley Tom Parkinson	8/24	Martha Love Ryan Murray Steven Olson
8/5	John Moore				
8/6	Lauren Diehl Kathy Murray	8/14	Ross Simler	8/26	JoEllen Kunkle Barbara Reichert Allison Lomison
8/7	Theresa Meier DuWayne Pople	8/20	Lianne Dunham Jayda Griffin Karina Korosec Nancy Olson	8/27	Ingrid Heilman Jean Sorn Gail Willis
8/9	Mike O'Grady	8/21	Lucas Lane Gene Wall	8/28	Kelsey Bollon Carl Kunkle
8/11	Sarah Brose Paige Hoffman Dawn Pontius	8/22	Greg Dunham		
		8/23	Harlow Pues		

August Anniversary's			
8/8	Daniel & Stacey Moore	8/29	Bill & Judy Brady Duke & Bev Herrling
8/10	Roger & Carole Hurlbut Don & Sandie Tresemer		