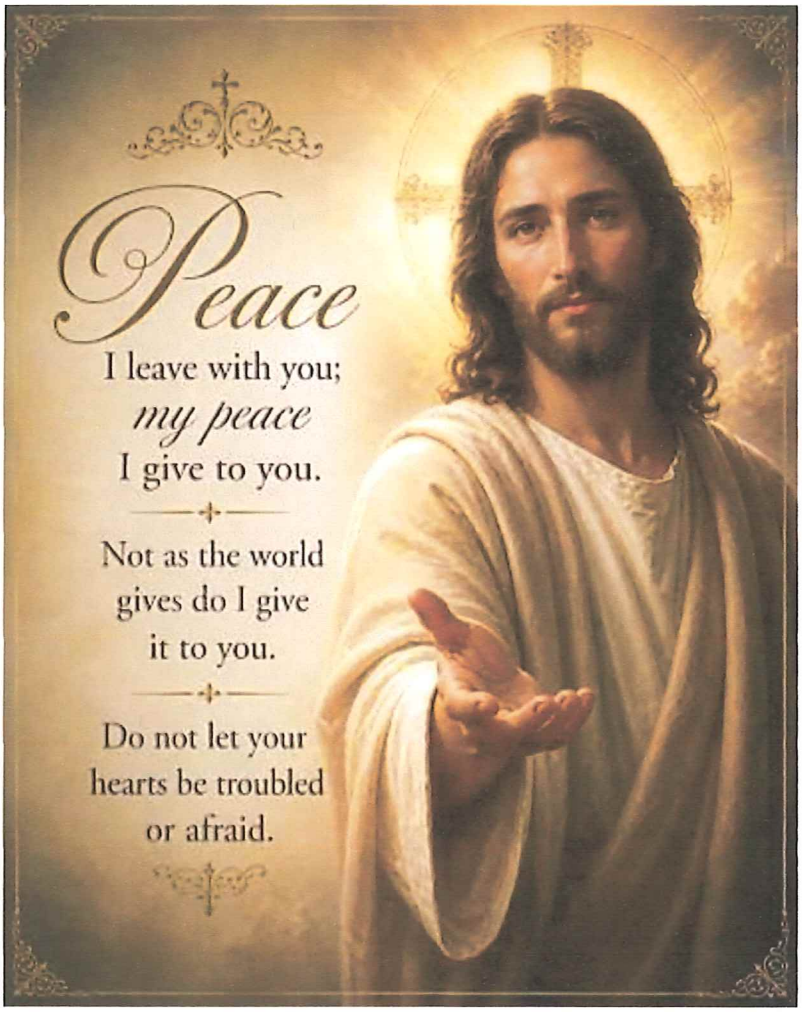
FIRST NEWS

First Lutheran Church
Freeport, IL 61032

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

Volume 53 #9 *September 2026*

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.



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

The days are beginning to shorten, school calendars are filling again, vacations are winding down, and before long we will notice that familiar rhythm of fall returning. There is something comforting about that rhythm. Not necessarily the busyness that can come with it, but the opportunity to gather again, learn again, worship together, and pay attention to where God may be leading us next.

This fall, there will be several opportunities to do just that.

Our Adult Faith Formation gatherings will return with studies centered on **Genesis and the Parables**. These familiar parts of Scripture still have a remarkable ability to surprise us. Genesis asks some of the biggest questions of faith: Who are we? Who is God? What does it mean to be created, called, blessed, broken, and restored? The parables of Jesus invite us to look again at the kingdom of God, often from angles we did not expect.

In worship, our sermons this fall will spend significant time rooted in the **Gospel of Matthew**. Matthew continually brings us back to the life and teaching of Jesus and asks what it actually looks like to follow him in the world around us.

And woven through all of this will be the values that continue to shape our life together at First Lutheran.

What does it mean for us to be **Gathered in Community**?

How do we practice **Belonging Over Barriers**?

What keeps us **Centered and Grounded**?

Where is **Love That Shows Up** needed beyond the walls of our building?

How are we being called to remain **Committed to Justice and Peace**?

These are not simply statements for a poster or words we visit once a year. They are questions we continue to live into together.

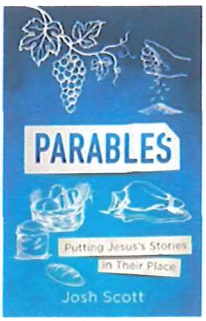
So as summer fades and fall begins, my hope is not simply that our calendars become fuller. My hope is that our lives together become deeper.

May this fall give us opportunities to gather around tables, open Scripture, listen to one another, worship faithfully, serve our neighbors, and discover again what God is doing among us and through us.

There is a rhythm beginning again.

Come find your place in it.

UPCOMING BIBLE STUDY



Tuesday at 12p

September 8: Parable One: Wine and Wineskins

September 15: Parable Two: Parable of the Mustard Seed

September 22: Parable Three: Parable of Leven Bread

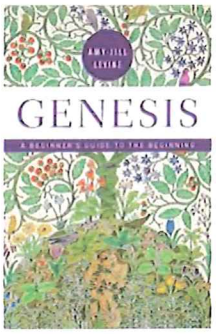
September 29: OFF (Pastor at PLC)

October 6: Parable Four: The Wicked Tenants

October 13: Parable Five: The Wedding Party

October 20: Parable Six: The Workers in the Vineyard

October 27: Session Break: Pastor on Continuing Education Week



Thursday Evenings at 6 pm

September 10: Genesis Chapter One: The Garden of Eden

September 17: Genesis Chapter Two: Cain and Abel

September 24: Genesis Chapter Three: Noah's Ark

October 1: Genesis Chapter Four: Near Sacrifice of Issac

October 8: Genesis Chapter Five: Jacob's Stairway to Heaven

October 15: Genesis Chapter Six: Joseph Saga

October 22: Session Break

October 29: Session Break: Pastor on Continuing Education Week

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 September and October. 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 August, we collected $76.61. This money was delivered to the FACC. The September noisy offering will be on September 13th, and the money will be donated to the Salvation Army. We appreciate your participation.

Grandparents Day- Sunday, September 13th is Grandparents Day. In celebration of this special day, we invite grandparents to bring their grandchildren to church with them, and grandchildren to bring their grandparents with them.

World Hunger Sunday - World Hunger Sunday is on August 30th, and next month it will be on September 27th. 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.

"God's Work Our Hands" Sunday - On Sunday, September 13th, congregations in the ELCA are encouraged to participate in an annual day of service, "God's Work, Our Hands". This year First Lutheran will participate by assembling the School Kits and Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. Supplies for these kits have been collected over the past few months and need to be assembled and boxed for delivery to the ingathering in October. In addition, there will be cards available to personalize and invite people to the national "Return to Church Sunday" on September 20th. Tables will be set up in Fellowship Hall to complete these during Coffee Hour. Please consider spending a few minutes helping out with these projects after worship. All ages are welcome!

Sunday School Resumes - Sunday School children are encouraged to participate in the day of service for "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday on September 13th. We will meet in Fellowship Hall after the worship service instead of in the classrooms. There will be several service projects which the youth can assist with. On September 20th, Sunday School classes will resume at 10:30 am, beginning in the music room. We look forward to seeing everyone again!

Choir - Please join the Celebration Choir in the balcony for their new year of song, celebration, and fun on September 10th at 7 pm. I'm looking forward to seeing our 'loyals' and would love to see some new faces joining our group. We have room and a folder for YOU! If questions, contact Teresa or the church office.

September Worship Volunteers				
Date	**Altar Guild**	**Usher**	**Reader**	**Assisting Minister**
September 6	Esther Eden	Volunteers Needed	Nancy Holtum	Sharon Wall
September 13	Steve & Nancy Olson	Tina Chamberlin	Nancy Holtum	Barb Statdfield
September 20	Brad & Rochelle Heilman	Volunteers Needed	Nancy Holtum	Dena Kampmier
September 27	Roger & Dena Kampmier	Tina Chamberlin	Nancy Holtum	Judy Kaufman

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 – Margaret Althoff, 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. The meal for the evening is Chicken Spaghetti. Come and join us. Everyone is welcome. Sign-up sheets are on the activity sign-up board.

Luther N Brew – The Luther N Brew group will meet on September 1st 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.

Annual Church BBQ – September 20th is Back to Church Sunday. As part of the celebration, the Evangelism team will be hosting the annual church BBQ. The team needs a few people to help with cooking and set up, and they are asking people to bring a dish to pass. Meat, drinks, and table settings will be supplied. A sign-up sheet is on the activity sign-up board by the water cooler. If you have a friend or family member who would like to return to church, invite them to join us on the 20th. Everyone is welcome.

WELCA

Bunko - The monthly Bunko group will gather on Thursday, September 17th 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 September 5th & 19th at 10:00 am 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.

Circle - Mary Circle and Rebecca Circle will meet for Bible Study and Fellowship on September 15th. Mary will meet at 9:30 am at Bev Herrling's home, and Rebecca will meet at 10:00 am in Fellowship Hall. We use the study in the Gather magazine, and copies will be available for those who come. Contact Judy Castle or Nancy Holtum for more information.

Project Day - Project Day meets on the second Thursday. Next month we will gather on September 10th 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

Office Help – We are in need of 1 or 2 people to assemble the church bulletins every other Friday. Traditionally, we have done this at 10:00 a.m.; however, the time can be flexible. This is a super easy job that takes approximately 15 minutes. If you have any questions or are willing to volunteer, please contact Melissa in the office. This is expected to be temporary. Thank you!

Flower Delivery – Occasionally the altar flowers will be donated to the church for delivery to a shut-in. We are in need of some people who would be willing to do the delivering. All deliveries would be in the Freeport area. You can just drop off the flowers, or you can stay and visit with the recipient; that is your choice. If you are willing to help us with this, please contact the church office or Dena Kampmier.

FACC –For August, we were asked to collect canned vegetables. As of August 19th, we have collected 80 cans of vegetables. That is over halfway to our goal of 125 cans. We are off to a great start, and we still have 1 more Sunday. For September, we are collecting chunky soup. I think we should stick with our 125-can goal since we have been doing such an awesome job and meeting our goals. 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.

July Attendance		
Date	**Sunday 9:00**	**Facebook Live**
July 5	62	192
July 12	55	237
July 19	62	199
July 26	55	205
Total	**234**	**833**

July Financials		
	Current Month	Year to Date
Total Income	$16,429.72	$142,248.14
Total Expenses	$26,613.53	$171,857.96
Income Less Expenses	**-$10,183.81**	**-$ 29,609.82**

The deadline for the October issue of First News is Monday, September 21st.
Any and all information is appreciated.

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 7th in honor of Labor Day. If you have an emergency, please reach out to Pastor Jeff at (330)234-1317, or you may leave a voicemail at the church, and we will return your call at our earliest convenience.

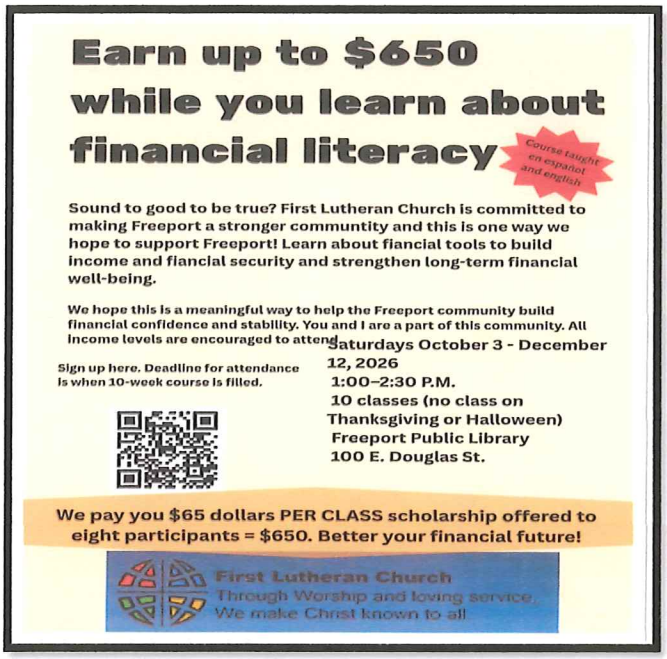
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

- **Trunk or Treat is October 31st**

AUGUST REMINDERS

- **World Hunger Sunday is August 30th.**



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September Birthday's					
9/1	Emily Cowman Sonya Dunham Dave Netherland	9/13	Carole Andres Marvin Beyer Nevaeh Paul	9/19	Carol Netherland Claire Slater
				9/20	Kenneth Chamberlin Judy Kaufman
				9/21	Wyatt Reese
9/2	Betty Eagan Allen Heilman Ted Odendahl	9/15	Harriett Gustason Anne Kurth	9/24	Landen Kampmier Connie Long
9/3	Deloris Burstrom Luca Korosec	9/16	Robert Willis	9/27	Alexandra Diehl Dena Kampmier
		9/17	Laurene Busjahn Sherry Simler Barrick Tormohlen		
9/5	Sharon Janicke				
9/7	James Ammentorp	9/18	Aaron Lovell	9/29	Lisa Heilman

September Anniversary's			
9/4	Don & Ingrid Heilman	9/19	Bethany & Adam Dickman
9/8	Robert & Gail Willis	9/22	Bill & Heather Castle
9/10	Jim & Judy Castle	9/26	Jeff & Cindy Cowman

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 12:00 NA 6:30 Luther N Brew	2 1:30 Finance Meeting 6:30 NA	3	4 11:30 Lunch @ Copper Leaf Café 6:30 NA	5 7:30 Bible Study 10:00 Knitting 12:00 NA
6 9:00 Worship 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Coffee Hour Home Communion 5:00 Games & Fellowship 6:00 Supper on Galena & Jackson	7 6:00 Evangelism Labor Day Office Closed	8 12:00 Bible Study 12:00 NA 6:00 Council Meeting	9 6:30 NA	10 10:00 Project Day 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 Choir	11 6:30 NA	12 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA
13 9:00 Worship 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Gods Work Our Hands 10:30 Coffee Hour Noisy Offering	14 1:00 Caregivers Meeting 7:00 Boy Scouts	15 12:00 Bible Study 12:00 NA	16 6:30 NA	17 1:00 Bunko 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 Choir	18 6:30 NA	19 7:30 Bible Study 10:00 Knitting 12:00 NA
20 9:00 Worship 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Coffee Hour 11:30 BBQ Back to Church Sunday	21 7:00 Boy Scouts First News Info Due	22 9:30 Mary Circle 10:00 Rebecca Circle 12:00 Bible Study 12:00 NA	23 6:30 NA	24 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 Choir	25 6:30 NA Fist News Sent	26 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA
27 9:00 Worship 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Coffee Hour World Hunger Sunday	28 7:00 Boy Scouts	29 12:00 Bible Study 12:00 NA	30 6:30 NA			