
April 2024 Newsletter



Pastor Carlin's Page

The Highest Office

On February 14th of 2018 a horrific shooting took place in Parkland Florida at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School. Unfortunately, seventeen students and faculty members were killed and many others injured. On that day, I found out about the shooting on my way to pick-up my high schooler. As I heard the reports on my car radio my heart began to sink. My thoughts went to my son as well as the other children at the Church, were I served at the time, who attended various schools within Rowan County. These schools are not any different from the one in Florida. This truly hit home for me and many throughout our nation. As usual at events like these emotions run high and discussions ensue about ways to end this sort of senseless violence from happening again.

Since this tragic day, I have heard a plethora of things many folks think will help. Most of these folks, I think are well meaning and have the best of intentions. I do not think this of the political class weighing in on the issue as both sides seek only a political advantage over the other. I have a very jaded view of politicians and feel they care little about the folks affected and are more interested in the talking point and issue to use for advantage. However, as much discussion as has taken place and it should, I have not heard anyone discuss what I consider the root cause of this and all other similar events. I believe the weak state of the family is the reason behind these events and most of the decline in our society.

The main reason the issue of the family is not mentioned is because it is not political and will not get clicks on social media or bring in viewers or readers to TV or print media. In other words, politicians and TV talking heads find little or no benefit in discussing this most pressing issue. Also, the thought of marriage and family has become passé and is thought to be a relic from our past that has outlasted its relevance. However, if one just delves briefly into statistical data from the past several decades we can see a direct correlation between social decline, violence, drug abuse, murder, as well as declines in adult behavior, student behavior and success in school and beyond. All this and more can be attributed to a decline in the family system.

How we got to this place can be traced over many decades and to various reasons. Though, when you find yourself in a ditch it is not as important how you got there as it is how you get out.

Many will not like my prescription because the places most look for help, the Government and pop culture cannot help. In fact, I would argue they are part of the problem. The remedy will not cost tax payers one red dime and does not require a new program from the Government or for Hollywood stars or famous singers of to give time or fortune toward. It is quite simple, really.

Here it is: we need to begin to take marriage and the raising of children seriously. You say come on preacher it can't be that simple, but yet it is. We as parents and couples need to take responsibility for the high office we hold. What office is that you may ask? Husband and wife and father and mother, these are the highest office anyone can hold, President, senator, congressman, doctor, esquire, pastor or any other position or office pales in comparison.

If people would just take their marriage vows seriously and the vows they take at Baptism for a child seriously and if children take affirmation of Baptism vows seriously many of the issues and ailments our society faces would shrink significantly. This requires personal responsibility from each of us. Our lives communities and nation rely on each other. Thus, when we have strong marriages and families we have strong children, schools, communities, and a nation. It is up to us to teach the next generation morals, ethics, common sense, manners and proper behavior as well as respect for the rights and life of everyone. Only, "We The People" can insure this to happen if we take marriage, family, children and especially God seriously.

Just for your information here are the vows for Baptism and affirmation of Baptism is very similar as the same promises are made:

As you present you child/yourself for baptism in Christian love, you are entrusted with gifts & responsibilities: LIVE with them among God's faithful people, BRING them to the services of worship in God's house, TEACH them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. As they grows in years, you should: PLACE in their hands the Holy Scriptures, PROVIDE for their instruction in the Christian faith, so that they may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed,

care for others and the world God made, and lead godly lives until the day of Jesus Christ. Do you promise to fulfill these obligations? Brian do you also take these promises for yourself?

I do.

Family and friends, do you promise to nurture this family in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, help them live in the covenant of baptism, support and pray for them in their new life in Christ?

We do.

Marriage declaration intention:

Bride, will you have **Groom** to be your husband, to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Response: I will.

Groom, will you have **Bride** to be your wife, to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

Response: I will.

Marriage Vows

In the presence of God and this community, I **Bride**, take you, **Groom**, to be my husband; to have and to hold from this day forward, in joy and sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

In the presence of God and this community, I **Groom**, take you, **Bride**, to be my wife; to have and to hold from this day forward, in joy and sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

May the Lord restore our families and our nation. Amen

Grace and peace to each of you!!

Pastor Carlin





April at Noah's Ark

We have had 2 NEW students that we have added to our 3-year-old classroom and 1 NEW student in our 4 year old room!

We still have lots of open enrollment 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 current 3-year-old classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:15-10:15 and 10:30-12:30.

The current 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 working on St. Patrick's Day activities and Easter! They did some Shamrocks and did Easter egg activities with stickers and colorful crayons! It was hard to get both celebrations in before we left for Spring Break! Our sensory bins were full on black and gold chick peas to scoop and dump and our Easter bin had Pom poms and Easter molds to fill!

Our 4 year olds have been working hard on writing their names and remembering the correct letters in preparation for Kindergarten! The 4's have also worked on St. Patrick's day and Easter crafts before break! They are going to learn their songs for graduation and begin their countdown!

Both of our classes watched the children's version of the Easter story of Jesus and the timeline for Holy Week. We talked about Jesus dying for our sins and that he will rise again on Sunday to be with God in heaven! They kids really see the meaning of this week when they can visualize what happened to our Savior at their level.

We have continued talking about our Calendars, counting to the number for the day (which is our date), and reporting what our weather is outside that day! This helps them see data and which has more/less (sunny, cloudy, rainy, snowy or windy).

*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: meets to "work" downstairs in the large Sunday School room on Saturdays from 9 am—5 pm. Come and go as needed.

ANNA CIRCLE: Will meet on Thursday, April 4, 2024, @ 1 pm in the Munson Room. We will be concluding our Bible study, The Women of Easter,. We will be choosing our next Bible study. Visitors and new members are always welcome to join us on the 1st Thursday afternoon of each month. If you have any questions—please call Lynnette @ 815/796-3216.

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

JOYFUL WOMEN: Joyful Women has completed their Bible study on the book entitled, "Who is the Holy Spirit". We usually complete one lesson weekly and then spend time in fellowship. Hope to see some new faces. If you have any questions, please call either Vicki Day @ 815/844-5420. or Sue Hiatt @ 815/844-7933.

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~





Food Pantry Needs

Thank you to all who have continued to generously donate food and supplies to the

Livingston Area Food Pantry during the coronavirus pandemic. The pantry has remained open with limited hours and drive-through pick ups to ensure the safety of the workers and clients. 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 will collect (especially personals) **laundry soap, dish soap, bar soap, female hygiene products (sanitary napkins & tampons), toilet paper, facial tissues, paper towels, COMPLETE pancake mix, syrup, kids' cereal, canned "complete" meals (w/meat), pop-top foods.** And, as always, any food or "non-essential" item is appreciated. All donated items should be **NON-PERISHABLE & NOT OUTDATED**, please. The Pantry is **CURRENTLY** in need of **EVERYTHING** (except canned vegetables and peanut butter).

I realize the list is long. Please feel free to choose as few or as many items as you wish. Moreover, 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 I check them weekly to 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~~

COMFORTING LADIES

The Comforting Ladies are once again meeting on Tuesday & Thursday afternoons beginning at 1 pm as well as their weekly Saturday get-togethers.

Currently we have nine (9) women working on quilts at church and/or at home. Since November 1, 64 quilts have been completed. Anyone is welcome to join us at any time. Come as your schedule allows.

If you have any questions, please talk to Lynnette (815) 796-3216

April Birthdays

Roberta Harms	4/1	Hayley Lucas	4/16
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 Robinson	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	Dixie Vogel	4/28
Jasmine Ray	4/15		



2023/2024 CONFIRMATION CLASS

There were 5 students completing their Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) on Sunday, April 24 at the 8 am service.

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

ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMUNION CHANGES—We will be communing at the rail weekly (except for Christmas Eve and Easter services). We once again offer intinction (as well as individual cups).

With the return of intinction we will once again need TWO communion assistants, so please sign up accordingly. Thank you.

GRIEF SUPPORT—Pastor Ours has introduced an outreach program for grief support. It is open to ANYONE who may be grieving in ANY way (not just the loss of a loved one). Please share the notifications of these meetings. April meeting will be the 29th at “The Breakroom”. Thank you.

Prayer Works



Please Pray for our Members & Friends:

Robbie Becker, Phyllis Bradley, Al Fahsbender, Kerry Foster, Terri Heins, Shelly Hodgson, Jim Jones, Cindy Rodriguez, Cheryl Weber, Stephen Weber, Cindi Arnold, John Clardy, Joshua Durbin, Betty Edwards, Katy Edwards, Katherine Harding, Jerry Jones, Joni Koch, Bill Lip-tak, Owen Lyons, Ariel Mattingly, Jakob Miller, Rochelle Nolan, Michael O'Shea, Chris Ross, Anita Sands, Gail Shaffer, Kathy Telford, Dave Tharp, John Turner, Carol Wilson, John Winchester, & Tiffany Wubben.

CHILDREN: Elliot Buchheit, Able Fuchs, Gabriela Krueger, Lucy McKinley, & Jalene Woolford

Let us pray for the following members

Evenglow Lodge: Harley Mayer

*Goldwater Care (formerly Good Sam):
Kerry Foster & Cindy Rodriguez*

IL Veteran's Home, LaSalle: Jim Jones

Meetings in April

Mondays, Apr 1 & 15
Euchre @ 6:30 pm

Mondays, Mar 1 & 15 (?)
Bible Study @ The Pointe @ 9:15 am

Wednesdays @ 9:30 am & @ 6:30 pm
Adult Bible Study

Saturdays @ 9 am
Comforting Ladies (Quilters)

Thursdays @ 6 pm
Choir

Thursday, Apr 4 @ 1 pm
Anna Circle

Thursday, Apr 4 @ 7 pm
VBS Meeting (Munson Room)

Sunday, Apr 7 @ 9:15ish
Soundboard/Slide Operators Meeting

Tuesday, Apr 9 @ 7 pm
Church Council

Sunday, Apr 14 @ 11:30 am
Tech Committee Meeting

Sunday, Apr 21 @ Noon
Caring Ministry

Monday, Apr 22 @ NOON
Newsletter Deadline

Wednesday, Apr 24 @ 5:30 pm
CEO Group @ Café Fontana

Friday, Apr 26 @ 9 am
Newsletter Assembly

Monday, Apr 29 @ 7 pm
Grief Support @ "The Breakroom"

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).

CEO GROUP

There is a new group coming to First Lutheran Church, called the CEO Group. Who are the CEO's? They are people who "come eat out" and dine together once a month at a local restaurant. The group will start in April after Easter. Based on the printed schedule below, if you would like to join them for dinner you would sign up on the clipboard during weekend services (& outside of the office during the week), then you meet at the restaurant that day at 5:30 pm and enjoy a meal with your fellow First Lutheran friends and guests. Each person is responsible for purchasing their own food, drink and tip. The restaurant will be notified by the designated host on Monday of that week with an approximate number of people who will be eating. Depending on the restaurant and the number of people attending, more than one table may be necessary. The days have been alternated to give those with previous commitments an opportunity to attend. Only Pontiac restaurants have been assigned at this time, but may be changed with the next schedule based upon the desires of the group. Additionally, different meal times (ie. breakfast or lunch) may be added. This is open to anyone of the First Lutheran family and their guest(s). Please consider coming out and enjoying the fellowship. In October a new schedule will be completed based upon your voiced feedback. Questions: Please contact Marion Willhoite or Vicki Day.

Wed., April 24—Café Fontana	Host: Marion Willhoite
Tue, May 28—Pontiac Family Kitchen	Host: Vicki Day
Wed, June 26—LaMex	Host: To be determined
Tue, July 23—Monical's	Host: To be determined
Wed, Aug 27—DeLong's	Host: To be determined
Tue, Sept 24—Edinger's	Host: To be determined
Wed, Oct 29—Bob & Ringo's	Host: To be determined

WATER MISSION INTERNATIONAL & BEYOND

First, the Mission/Social committee would like to thank the congregation for your support of our Water Mission project. We were able to send over \$2000 by the end of February. This money was matched by a generous supporter of the charity.

Next, our committee received an appeal from SMI Haiti, an NALC ministry. We support three Haitian students each year, allowing them the opportunity to receive an education (plus a nutritious meal daily). As you may be aware, the situation in Haiti is dire. Gangs have taken over, which has caused a severe food and housing shortage (not to mention how dangerous it is to leave their homes). SMI Haiti is asking for monetary donations to help with food, shelter and medical supplies. Our committee is donating \$250 and would appreciate any support you can donate. Checks should be made out to: **First Lutheran Church**, with **SMI Haiti** in the memo line.

Thank you.

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 1 & 15 May 6 & 20 June 3 & 17 July 1 & 15

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





First Lutheran Church will be hosting a community-wide Vacation Bible School from June 3-7. This year's theme is SCUBA, where we will be taking kids deep into an amazing undersea adventure where they'll experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God. The participants will be immersed in the Word and discover what living water is really all about!

Our VBS welcomes potty-trained 3 year olds (by 1/1/24) through sixth grade. Registration will begin May 1st in the church office, on the church website, and online at www.myVBS.org/firstlutheran.

As always, we have a fantastic team of volunteers who will work in faith to share God's love to the children in our church and in our community. Our mornings which run from 8:15—11:45 am, will be full of faith discoveries, memorable music, snacks, crafts, and games as we learn that God is real and is our friend forever.

More volunteers are needed to provide a fun and safe VBS experience for the children. If you are interested in helping, please let me know. Help is always needed in the craft area, the kitchen, and with decorations. There are opportunities for everyone to help, no matter what the age or skill level.

We would also appreciate your support. You can help through prayers, craft and snack donations, along with monetary donations. More information will be shared soon through temple talks, First Notes, and on sign-up sheets.

We have chosen the Livingston County Community Pantry as our mission project during VBS. During that week we are asking the participants and volunteers to bring the following items in hopes of collecting at least 500 items:

- Boxed cereal including kid's favorites.
- Complete pancake mix and syrup.
- Complete meals including easy-open canned pastas with meat.
- Toilet paper and paper towels.
- Laundry detergent.

Questions? Contact Chris Lauritzen at 815.674.5326. We are looking forward to this year's SCUBA adventure!

TECH COMMITTEE

The First Lutheran Church Tech Committee needs your help!! As a committee recently established by the Church council, one of the committee's most immediate needs is MORE committee members. **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE TECHNICALLY INCLINED TO SERVE ON OUR TECH COMMITTEE!** We are seeking committee members from all three worship services and from ALL generations (youth through ??) Our goal is to leverage tech at First Lutheran to reach our current membership, our local community and beyond.

Please consider attending the next meeting which is scheduled for Sunday, April 14 at 11:30 am.

SOUNDBOARD / POWERPOINT TECH MEETING: The Tech Committee would like all who participate in Soundboard and PowerPoint presentations for our worship services to attend a meeting on **Sunday, April 7th** between services (approximately 9:15 am). We are also seeking additional help with our soundboard and PowerPoint presentations.

Anyone who is interested in helping with this (whether paid or volunteer) should try and attend this meeting. We hope to see some new faces (Junior High age and up) joining in to help enhance our worship services!

THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING OUR 2024 EASTER LILIES



Anonymous

In honor of the Lynnette Mundschenk

Carlson Family

In honor of blessings received

Gene Coriell

In memory of Chris Coriell

Jim & Patti Drengwitz

In honor of our children & grandchildren

Jim & Patti Drengwitz

In memory of our parents

Larry & Dawn Graves

In honor of our grandchildren

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

Will & Grace Hall

Edward & Gladys Carls

Karol Hall, Dee Dee Raube & Roger Carls

In memory of our sister - Cheri Carls Gibbons

Judy Henderson

In memory of William "Bill" Henderson II

Judy Henderson

In memory of William "Wil" Henderson III

Roger & Donna Henkel

In honor of blessings received

MaryAnn & Rick Johnson

In memory of Bernadine & Harold Johnson
Lois Abels
Merlyn Abels
Melvin Abels
Norman Abels
Alvin Abels

Kelly & Mary Lou Jones

In memory of Shirley Hendershot

Rick & Candy Jones

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

Greg & Kathy Weber

In memory of Willie & Marilyn Weber

Betty Winterland

In memory of Dottie Freeman

Kelly Family

In honor of Carl & Sandy Schade

Nancy LoPiccalo

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

Nancy LoPiccalo

In honor of children & grandchildren

Larry & Betty Olson

In honor of son, Kevin Olson & family

Larry & Betty Olson

In memory of son, Keith Olson

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

Teri Rich & Lyla Wilson

In memory of Carol Diemer

Cindy Rodrigues

In memory of Rupert Rodriguez

Carl & Sandy Schade

In memory of family loved ones

Shirley Trainor

In memory of Don Trainor

Greg & Kathy Weber

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Pastor Carlin: carlinours@gmail.com

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**APRIL
2024**

“Worshipping 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

2024 Congregational Council:

Jim Drengwitz, President	Stephanie Durbin
Jeff Bressner, V. President	Al Fahsbender
Cathy Robinson, Secretary	Dawn Graves
Elizabeth Diemer, Treasurer	Marcia Legner
Steve Ray, Fin. Secretary	Julie Rapp
Christine Brown	Gail Smythe