



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CHIMES

Sharing Christ's Love

September 2025
Volume 64, Issue 9
www.firstgeneseo.org

WORSHIP WITH US THIS WEEKEND!

Worship Saturday 5:30 p.m.
Worship & Livestream Sunday 9:30 a.m.

God's Work. Our Hands. *Sunday, September 7*

God's Work Our Hands is a day of service across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Our congregation will gather after worship, at about 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Room. This year, you will have the choice of three service projects:

- One team will head outside to the playground to spread mulch in preparation for our new school year, and to complete some additional outdoor projects.
Please bring: work gloves, if you wish; a rake, if you have one.
- One team will do road side clean up on Hwy 6. *Please bring work gloves.*
- One team will assemble and pack Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief.

See page 7 for a list of items being collected through September 7.

After our work is completed, lunch will be provided for all volunteers by our Social Ministry team. Please consider joining us and our fellow Lutherans churchwide for a morning of fun, fellowship and service! All ages and abilities are welcome!



First Lutheran Is Now Hiring *Director of Youth & Family Ministry*

We are seeking a faithful and motivated individual to join our staff team as our Director of Youth & Family Ministry. This position is up to 40 hours per week and includes ministry with children and youth birth through high school and their families. More information, including the full position description, is available on our website in the Announcements section. To apply, submit the application along with a cover letter and resumé to Mary Jo Brummet, (mjbrummet@firstgeneseo.org) by September 15.

A New Chapter... Together

It is my sincere joy to finally be among you for this coming year of shared ministry! I have been looking forward to this year for a long time, and I can't wait to dream some more and serve with all of you.

I grew up in the countryside of central Iowa, around the Ames area. My younger brother and I were homeschooled by my mom from kindergarten to 12th grade, which was certainly more than a full time job for her!!! Now, she works in human services, helping women and children find stable housing. My dad is an accountant, though his true passion is farming, and he works for a local farmer doing all sorts of fun things. My brother also works full-time for that farmer, and his wife stays at home with their horses and dog. All in all, we are a close-knit family with deep connections to the soil and to our faith.

When I was little, my mom would joke that we spent almost as much time at our congregation as we did at home. I think she wasn't far off! We were involved in almost every aspect of church life, from children's ministry to youth group to worship team to finance committee. I LOVED being a church kid and that love has only grown as I have developed my call. As a high school student, I knew I wanted to work in a church. Since my home congregation was North American Baptist, I had not been exposed to women in ministry leadership except for children's ministry. I pursued that path until I saw a woman preach and introduce herself as "Pastor" at a retreat, at which point my entire world was blown apart. The thing that I had felt a call towards could actually be an opportunity for me!

In my concurrent search for a denomination and a college, I landed on Wartburg College in Waverly, IA and thus the ELCA. At Wartburg, I studied a variety of things and specialized in making worship welcoming and accessible as well as exploring ecumenical partnerships. Wartburg gave me another gift: my now-husband, Nathaniel. He and I were classmates together and gradually fell in love at college. We got married on May 31st this year and have been happily building our new life together. Nathaniel is the vicar at Grace Lutheran Church in Knoxville, IL and we live in his parsonage in Knoxville.

The most recent chapter in my life has been seminary. I chose to attend the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago because I wanted something completely new. I certainly satisfied my appetite for big city living and was ready to be done! I have completed two years of my seminary schooling, now I am in my internship year, and then I will finish with one more year of seminary online. This year is important to my overall learning as it gives me a chance to put into practice all the academic knowledge I have been gathering. I am excited to be in a congregation and working with people of faith to achieve our mutual goals. I am confident that we will all have a great year of ministry and sharing Christ's love.

—*Vicar Madelyn*

September 6 & 7, 2025

Season of Creation: Ocean & Lake

This weekend's texts include Job 38:1-18; Psalm 104:1-9, 24-26; Revelation 19:6-8; and Luke 5:1-11.

September 13 & 14, 2025

Season of Creation: Animal

This weekend's texts include Job 39:1-8, 26-30; Psalm 104:14-23; Revelation 5:1-10 and Luke 12:22-31.

September 20 & 21, 2025

Season of Creation: Storm & Weather

This weekend's texts include Job 28:20-27; Psalm 29; Revelation 4:1-8 and Luke 8:22-25.

September 27 & 28, 2025

Season of Creation: Cosmos | Blessing of the Harvest

This weekend's texts include Proverbs 8:22-31; Psalm 148; Colossians 1:15-20 and Luke 24:44-53.

Blessing of the Harvest

With the upcoming harvest season, First Lutheran will be praying for the safety of all farmers, and for a bountiful harvest. Farmers are invited to bring a symbol of their harvest to be blessed during the worship services on September 27 & 28.

FIRST WORSHIP & MUSIC

Worship at Liberty Village

Pastor Laura, Vicar Madelyn and Inger will lead worship at Liberty Village on September 28 at 1 p.m. Volunteers are needed to help lead singing, and all are welcome to worship with our members and friends!

Please keep the following Lifelines petitions in your prayers:

World and Community: For the people of Ukraine, Israel, and Gaza. For our leaders: President Donald Trump and Governor J.B. Pritzker. For health care workers. For all who work for peace and justice. For those serving our country in the military, especially Brian Hanshaw (*Jan & Steve Weber's son-in-law*), Jacob Hartman, Christopher Unrath, Law Enforcement Officers and First Responders.

Church: For our bishops: Rev. Elizabeth Eaton and Rev. Stacie Fidler. For our partners in ministry: Pastor Emmanuel Gideon Mollel and the people of Ilkiding'a and Osupuko Parishes in Tanzania; Rev. Dr. Peter Paul Thomas, Bishop of the Arcot Lutheran Synod, India. For missionaries who share the Gospel around the world. For Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center. For our pastor, parish staff, Preschool staff and Church Council (names listed on pg. 8).

Health and Wellbeing: Sam _____ (*Tony & Jenn Stoeger's niece*), Ann Behrendt (*Phil Wildermuth's sister*), Courtney Benke (*Mindy Brown and Melissa McCarty's friend*), Carol Boyd, Todd Buechler, Virginia Cernick (*Melissa McCarty's mother*), Gary Daniels, Martha Fleming (*Jean Williams's friend and Adam Fleming's mother*), Janet Larson, Karen Myhre, Alan Novak (*Melissa McCarty's father*), Joe Schellhase (*Jodi Barnhart's father*), Peggy Schram (*Doris Swanson's daughter*), Barbara Sigwalt (*Kathi Fluck's friend*), Mike Simosky, Eileen Soverino (*Melissa McCarty's aunt*) and Dee Sterling.

Joys: On the baptism of Sophie-ann Vermillion, daughter of Matthew & Kaci-ann Vermillion. For the homecoming of Easton and Jace VanDoren, twin grandsons of Jay & Darcie VanDoren. On the births of Angelina June, daughter of Emma Robinson and Izaak Duffer; and Esther Penelope, daughter of Rev. Catherine & Dillon Ford and granddaughter of Judy & Marty Nelson. We welcomed new members Dennis Bloomberg; Matthew, Lauryn, Stella & Josie Deets; Loretta Dick; Rev. Scott & Trish Schmidt; and Jeff Harling to our church family on August 16 & 17.

Sorrows: On the deaths of Mary Blauvelt, mother of Linda Bloomberg; Arvella Calder, mother of Lendol Calder; and Nola Walker, sister of Linda Mullin.

Thanksgiving:

If you wish to submit a prayer request, please visit www.firstgeneseo.org and use the password First! to access the prayer request form in the Member Access Section. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or are admitted to the hospital, please call the church office. In the event of an after-hours emergency please contact Pastor Laura at 703-505-8710.

FIRST PRAYER

FIRST MINISTRIES



Milestones Ministry ~ *Welcoming Young Children to Worship: Sanctuary Crawl*

Event: Saturday, September 13 ~ 4:30-5:15 p.m.

Kindergarten children and their families learn about Worship at First! Kids can ask questions, explore the Sanctuary, and learn how they can be an important part of worship.

Children will receive their stones during worship that evening.

Milestones Ministry ~ *Bible Adventures*

Event: Sunday, September 14 from 3:30-5 p.m. ~ Blessing: Sunday, September 21

Second- and third-grade students and their families come together to learn about God's written word. We will explore the Bible and discuss ways to utilize it together as a family.

Contact Pastor Laura to sign up for these events!

Faithtime Kids (*Wednesdays Afterschool*)

Faithtime Kids kicks off Wednesday, September 10 from 3:15-5:15 p.m.

All children Grades K-5

September 10 *The Light*

September 17 *Circle of the Church Year*

September 24 *No Faithtime (half day of school)*

Healing Hearts

Healing Hearts continues to meet monthly for dinner and conversation. All widows at First Lutheran are invited to join us at The Cellar on Wednesday, September 3 at 5 p.m. Please RSVP to Kathy Rogers, coordinator of the group, at (309) 945-5132 or call the church office. (*Reservations necessary*)

New Members

Dennis Bloomberg and his wife Linda live in Colona. He is semi-retired, and still drives trucks for Randy Borkgren. Linda and Dennis have 3 children, 10 grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren, and 2 cats at home, Scrappy and Finnegan.

Matthew, Lauryn, Josie, and Stella Deets live in Geneseo. Josie and Stella are students at Southwest Elementary; Josie is a 3rd grader and Stella is a 1st grader. Matthew teaches Physics at Geneseo High School and coaches track. Lauryn teaches strings at the Pleasant Valley school district.

Loretta Dick and her husband Dennis live in Geneseo. They have 3 adult daughters – Lauryn Deets, plus Shanyn in Minnesota and Carolyn in North Carolina. They have 4 grandchildren plus 2 bonus grandchildren altogether. Loretta is a retired accountant, and she loves to sew and read.

Jeff Harling lives in Annawan and works for Micron Industries in Sterling. He has 3 adult children and 5 grandchildren.

Rev. Scott and Trish Schmidt live in Princeton. Pastor Scott retired from ministry there in May. They have 2 sons, Adam and Alex, and 2 grandchildren. Trish is a retired teacher – she taught 6th grade Social Studies. Pastor Scott serves as the fire chaplain for the Princeton Fire Department.

Welcome Pastor Tom Heyd!

The Mission Endowment Committee is pleased to welcome Pastor Tom Heyd as our guest preacher on the weekend of September 20 & 21. Pastor Heyd is visiting as part of our multi-year campaign: Celebrating a Proud Past, Preparing for a Faithful Future.

Pastor Heyd served as the Pastor of First Lutheran from 1999 until 2006. He is retired now, and writes: "I am living in Roseville (Minnesota), close to my daughters and grandchildren. My time is mostly occupied by reading, writing (mostly religious topics) and small character carving. I have a number of new appliances that help me cook, but nothing helps me maintain the floors."

We hope you are all able to join us on the weekend of September 20 & 21 to welcome Pastor Heyd back to Geneseo.

FIRST MINISTRIES

First Book Club

Come and join us for discussion on the content of the book *Keeping Faith* and faith response to the author Jodi Picoult on Thursday, September 18 at 2 p.m. in Grace Place.

In "Keeping Faith," Jodi Picoult tells the story of Mariah White and her seven-year-old daughter, Faith, whose lives are dramatically altered after a painful divorce. Faith, who has no prior religious background, begins communicating with an imaginary friend she calls "her Guard," who is later revealed to be God. As Faith experiences stigmata, performs miraculous healings, and quotes scripture, a media frenzy ensues, drawing both believers and skeptics. This leads to a custody battle, with Faith's father, Colin, seeking sole custody, and a confrontation with Ian Fletcher, a celebrity atheist who aims to debunk Faith's perceived miracles. The story explores themes of faith, belief, family, and the power of the human spirit. Read the book and join our discussion!

"A Sherlock Carol" An Afternoon with Richmond Hill Players & First Lutheran

Date: Sunday, November 16

Time: Fellowship at First beginning at 1 p.m.

Show at 3 p.m. at Richmond Hill Theater

Tickets: \$12 each



Congregational Life invites you to attend the holiday production of **A Sherlock Carol** with us! Plan to meet at the church for a time of fellowship (*light snacks*) at 1 p.m. and then head over to Richmond Hill Theater as a group to watch this fun play together at 2:15 p.m. Sign up at the Welcome Center and pay by Sunday, October 5 or use the QR code to register and pay online!

- If you'd like to attend and prefer to just join us at Richmond Hill Theater, that's fine too! Doors open at the Theater at 2 p.m.

Here's more information on the play: Moriarty is dead, to begin with. And Sherlock Holmes is a haunted man. But, when a grown-up Tiny Tim asks Holmes to investigate the death of Ebenezer Scrooge, the Great Detective must use his gifts to solve a Dickens of a Christmas mystery! Six actors take on the beloved characters of Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Dickens in this heartwarming and highly theatrical holiday treat for all ages!

Cast

Sherlock Holmes – Tom Akers
Ebenezer Scrooge – Tom Morrow
Actor One – Jason Schaad
Actor Two – Amanda Wilson
Actor Three – Jacob Lund
Actor Four – Jackie Skiles

Crew

Director – Joe DePauw
Stage Manager – Elizabeth Shafer
Set Builder – Mike Skiles
Jim Skiles
Light & Sound Design – TBD



FIRST MINISTRIES

First Lutheran Preschool

Welcome back to preschool! Our preschool year will begin on September 2 and we are excited to welcome our preschool children and families! We continue to plan for every child to experience a positive, safe and happy environment at preschool. Both classes will begin the year with a focus on expressing feelings and emotions through fun activities and projects. We'll be getting to know all about each other this month and will begin our autumn activities. We are looking forward to a wonderful year!

Sanctuary Singers

The Sanctuary Singers will resume rehearsals on Wednesday, September 10. Rehearsals are from 7-8:30 p.m. in the choir room. High-school aged youth and older are welcome!

Glory Ringers

The Glory Ringers bell choir will resume rehearsals on Thursday, September 11. Rehearsals are from 7-8 p.m. in the choir room and we are looking for 3 or 4 more youth or adult ringers!

First Friends

Wow....where did the summer go? Come, reconnect and enjoy a delicious lunch at First Friends on Thursday, September 11. Everyone is welcome to join the group for a meal of pork loin, sides and dessert. Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. with plenty of time for fellowship after the meal. Cost is \$7. Sign up at the Welcome Center or call the church office if you plan to attend.

High School Youth Group

The High School Youth Group meets on Sunday, September 28, 5-7 p.m. for supper, fellowship, and faith formation. All youth, grades 9-12 are welcome (friends too!).

Council Highlights for August 18, 2025

- Called a special meeting of the Congregation for October 19 at 10:30 a.m. Agenda includes benevolence disbursement recommendation from the Swanson Trust Task Force and amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions.
- Security cameras will be installed soon.
- New first aid kits have been placed throughout church.
- Wirth has begun installing the new HVAC units.
- Approved funding requests: \$1,000 from Social Ministry to Braveheart Children's Advocacy Center. \$3,000 from Unbudgeted Projects for staff moving expenses. \$2,800 from Unbudgeted Projects for new office furniture.
- Approved updates to job description for Director of Youth & Family Ministry.
- Our new congregation app has launched, and training was held.

July Financial Report

General Fund Offering:

July actual	\$24,668
July budget	\$37,308
YTD actual	\$285,315
YTD budget	\$308,658

Net Income Over Expenses:

July actual	\$14,993 deficit
July budget	\$4,317 deficit
YTD actual	\$20,300 deficit
YTD budget	\$20,988 deficit

A Special Note of Thanks

Dear First Lutheran family,
Arthur was a blessing to so many throughout his life. Your care and prayerful support is a blessing to us. Thank you for your thoughtfulness with a gift of \$1,000 to ELCA World Hunger. It is deeply appreciated.

With heartfelt gratitude,
—Bergren/Prinz Family

Thank You

I would like to thank all my church family for their lovely cards and kind condolences on the loss of my mother, Mary. I appreciated it and I appreciate all of you.

—Linda Bloomberg

LWR Personal Care Kits

Lutheran World Relief provides Personal Care Kits each year to those in need due to natural disasters, war, violence, and civil unrest. We are collecting *light-weight dark color bath towels* (must be no larger than 52 x 27, dark color recommended), *adult-size toothbrushes* (multipacks are acceptable), *sturdy combs*, *bath-size bars of soap*, and *metal nail clippers*. Items can be placed in the baskets at the display in the Fellowship Room through September 7.

Food Pantry Collection

The Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry is collecting juice, coffee, chips, canned fruit, canned vegetables, spaghetti sauce and all kinds of soups to share with those in our community. Donations may be left in the basket by the church office.

Women's Ministry

Cover Girls Quilting

Come see what Cover Girls are all about! Join us for a time of fellowship and fun tying quilts for LWR on Wednesdays, September 3, 10, 17 & 24 in Grace Place. All are welcome!

Bible Study

We will gather on Wednesday, September 24 at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room A. We will be using the Lutheran magazine, "Gather" for our study guide. Everyone is welcome!

FIRST MINISTRIES



You're invited to a Life Line Screening event!

Where: Saint John Lutheran Church
8948 N 1900th Ave, Geneseo IL

When: September 25th, 2025

Life Line Screening is the nation's leader in **Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk** Screenings.

Trusted by over 11 million customers.

Screenings are simple and painless. Get peace of mind or early detection.

Who should attend:
Anyone **age of 40+**

Special Pricing for \$129

- ♥ Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- ♥ Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- ♥ Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
- ♥ Peripheral Artery Disease Screening

4 ways to book your appointment...

Call 800-324-9458 and use promo code HABC001

Visit LLSA.SOCIAL/HABC

 

Text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607

These tests cannot detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease. Those with abnormal results should discuss possible next steps with their family healthcare provider and ensure they understand the risk and benefits of any additional testing or procedures.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Noisy Offering

A *Noisy Offering* will be collected the weekend of September 6 & 7 to benefit the Mission Endowment Fund. Bring your nickels and dimes!

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Tuesday-Thursday

8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Wednesday

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Friday

Office Closed

Closed for Lunch ~ Noon–1 p.m.

COUNCIL

Jeff Boyer—*President*
Sam Marshall—*Vice-President*
Julie Kunkel—*Secretary*
Matt Simosky—*Treasurer*

Chris Ahlstrand, Chase Anselmi,
Cindy Groene, Jamian Haser,
Kathy Heller, Lorrie Lord,
Eli Palmer, Linda Sheley

Meeting Schedule:

Cabinet — **Monday, September 8**
Ministries — **Monday, September 8**
Council — **Monday, September 22**

**NEXT CHIMES DEADLINE:
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9**