








J U L Y 2 0 2 1

# Friends in Christ News

★ Friends in Christ Lutheran Church – 1338 Clay Street – Morris Illinois 60450  
 Office Hours M-F: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm [www.ficl.org](http://www.ficl.org) 815/941-1255

## In This Issue

	A WORD FROM PASTOR .....	1-3
	THE POWER OF IN-PERSON WORSHIP .....	3
	LWML .....	3
	BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES .....	4
	FINANCIAL REPORT .....	4
	PRAYER CALENDAR .....	5
	CHURCH CALENDAR .....	6

## Worship Times

Saturday Evenings ... 5:30 p.m.  
 Sunday Mornings ... 9:30 a.m.  
*(Sunday morning 9:30 a.m. service is  
 live-streamed at [www.facebook.com/ficl](http://www.facebook.com/ficl))*

Sunday Bible Study ... 10:30 a.m.  
 Tuesday Bible Study ... 9:00 a.m.  
*(Online via ZOOM)*

## In God We Trust

*What does this mean?*

Is it a slogan, a claim that “we are right,” . . .or what? Let’s examine and test it.

### *In Morris, Illinois:*

There are “things” going on all around us right now.

This Tuesday things started out normal. But by the end of the morning there was a huge battery fire on the east side of town, with a plume of smoke and the wind blowing chemicals all around. Then we were told to evacuate. Nothing was normal. Many did not have the chance to pack clothes. Others were worried about getting back in for their meds.

What were we to do? Nothing was normal. Where to sleep? . . .

“**In God We Trust**” and so we went on doing what we had to do and trusting God.

### *In our personal lives:*

Things go wrong in life, and the longer you live the more ways you have seen them go wrong, Conflicts. Finances. Health.

My friend Harry said to me just a few weeks ago, when he was getting ready for surgery, “I look at it this way. I’m going to wake up. If I wake up and see God, I win. If I wake up and see my family, I win. So either way I win.”

“**In God We Trust**”

### *Facing disease, pandemics & plagues:*

Looking back over the last year and a half: We have been scared; restricted; had to learn to wear masks; heard stories of sickness and stories of sickness and death. We have been restricted; told to stay at home; businesses



were shut down; we sometimes wondered if it was ever going to end; and on and on. But, **“In God We Trust”**

### ***In Faith and Religion:***

Churches last year were restricted from meeting together to worship; and when they were allowed to meet, they were told not to sing. Communion was looked at as a special threat; Pastors were focused on as a medical threat and specifically restricted from hospitals, nursing homes, and from the bedside of the dying. Around our nation and the world, we had to figure out how to minister, how to hold congregations together, and how to reach out to the fearful and hurting. But the stories are also all over in our nation and around the world about how unexpectedly, over and over again, new connections formed, and many who had ignored spiritual things began to seek out and want to hear about Jesus. The kingdom of God continues being gathered by God, and we are heading toward the end when all believers in Jesus will gather in living forever.

**“In God We Trust”**

### **“In God We Trust” is also our National Motto – What does this mean?**

The founding fathers of our country could look back over the many ways things could have failed in the beginning. From that perspective, “In God We Trust” is a confession that we are not noble enough, not moral enough, not wise enough, and entirely not sufficient to establish, run and preserve a free nation. We need God and without Him we would fail very quickly. In military parlance we need Him to “have our six” (have our back). That was the understanding of our nation’s founding fathers, and they said it over and over again. From Washington, looking back over the perils of the Revolutionary war, to Ben Franklin saying of the new nation that it is “a republic if you can keep it.” They said that our constitution is wholly inadequate for a people without morals or religion. Thomas Jefferson confessed that he feared for his nation when he contemplated that God is a just God. And Abraham Lincoln was not concerned “that God is on our side” but rather that we should be “on God’s side.”

**“In God We Trust”** had been around as a saying since the mid-1700’s (leading up to the war to gain freedom from England). It came to prominence in the Civil War among the troops fighting to end slavery (when, by the way, it first appeared on some coins). It became our official motto in the 1950’s (after WWII’s fight against fascism and during the cold war against communism). So it has always been connected with the yearning for freedom.

### **That raises the question, “Can there be true freedom without God?”**

Many in our time are seeking exactly that, freedom without God. They are vocal about it. They say boldly they do not need religion to be moral, do not need God to have a good life, and certainly do not need church, which is just rules and restrictions (as they miss almost all of what church really is).

But with regard to “morality without God” – how many times do we watch and want to say, “And how’s that working out for you.” Our culture seems to be busy reinventing morality, built on a foundation that is completely shifting and temporary. Again, we want to ask, “And how’s that working out for you?”

**“In God We Trust”** is anything but a slogan of prideful boasting.

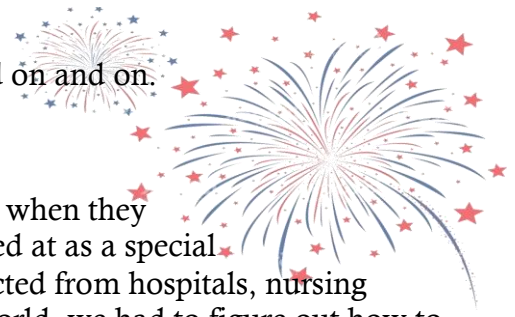
In its various parts it is:

- Turning to God in our times of trouble;
- Praying to be corrected when we have gone wrong;
- Trust that He will bless our simple efforts to live a moral life and care for our loved ones;
- Gratitude for the blessings of freedom; and
- Dedication to see freedom grow in our land and for all humanity.

### **Most Importantly:**

We need to say **“In God We Trust”** when things *are* going right. That is the time when we are tempted to

(Continued on page 3)



# Anniversaries

- 1<sup>st</sup> Mike & Brenda Collins 37 years
- 22<sup>nd</sup> James & Deb Krugler 43 years
- 30<sup>th</sup> Michael & Vicki Kahn 39 years

# Birthdays

- 6<sup>th</sup> Kurt Johnson
- 9<sup>th</sup> Alexis Carter
- 11<sup>th</sup> Calvin Nelson
- 14<sup>th</sup> Jerald Van Heiden
- 16<sup>th</sup> Emma Oslakovich
- 17<sup>th</sup> Ashley Kane
- 19<sup>th</sup> Connie Van Heiden
- 24<sup>th</sup> Ann Oslakovich
- 26<sup>th</sup> Laina Johnson
- 29<sup>th</sup> Alice Hunt
- 30<sup>th</sup> Todd Schultz  
Amy Smith



*“As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.”*  
(Ecclesiastes 11:5)

*Optimists don't ignore the difficulties, but the acknowledgement of God's presence prevents them from becoming discouraged. It's impossible to stand in the Lord's presence and be a pessimist. If we focus on our problems, they'll seem gigantic. . .*

*. . .but as we focus on God, we see our situation in perspective and are assured that all things are possible.*

*-Henry Blackaby*



## Financial Report Friends in Christ Lutheran Church 2021

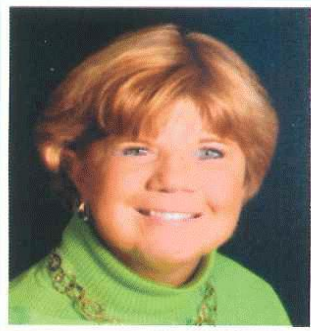


**THANK YOU FOR CONTINUING TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH DURING CORONAVIRUS**

General Fund	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	YTD Actual	BUDGETED
Income	\$ 9,719.67	\$ 12,137.83	\$ 12,835.12	\$ 17,193.67	\$ 9,174.76	\$ 61,061.05	\$ 58,475.00
Expenses	\$ 9,409.76	\$ 9,308.01	\$ 13,064.45	\$ 9,138.28	\$ 7,888.97	\$ 48,809.47	\$ 58,455.00
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 309.91	\$ 2,829.82	\$ (229.33)	\$ 8,055.39	\$ 1,285.79	\$ 12,251.58	

# The Power of IN PERSON WORSHIP

Pam Meyer, a lay person and life-long member of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chicago Heights, knows the importance of coming together for worship. Though online worship definitely has its place, Meyer said that over time "church time" can become just like watching a scheduled TV show. The dangers are that people can become easily distracted, perhaps even fast-forwarding through portions of the service they may not like.



Pam Meyer  
Member, St. Paul's  
Evangelical Lutheran  
Church, Chicago Heights

Meyer emphasized the importance of a Christian community. "Especially now, when many of our Biblical teachings are under attack, the support of fellow Christians on a very regular basis is critical," she said.

She also pointed out that online services don't allow us to receive the Body and Blood of Christ which is the real presence of Jesus, freely given for our forgiveness, life, salvation, and a public proclamation of His death until He returns. Meyer also stressed how important it is to witness other Christians in action.

"More than ever, society needs to see Christians living as Christians, walking the walk and not just saying we are Christians," she said. "Being surrounded by other faithful Christians allows us to learn how to emulate how Jesus lived his life."

Meyer, who has served in various lay positions for almost forty years, has been blessed with family witnesses to Christ. Her great-grandfather and a cousin were pastors at St. Paul's. Great uncles, cousins, and a brother have also been pastors, and many of her relatives have served as Lutheran school teachers.



Historical St. Paul's Chicago Heights

"My parents were very active in the church and the parochial school, so they modeled the faith behavior my family practices to this day," said Meyer.

trust in ourselves, our abilities and our wisdom. Even if I was completely faultless and living the righteous life for this life, I would still have to stand before God. I need the holiness of Jesus to make me fit for eternal life. I need the Son of God to set me free (John 8:36) in order to "be free indeed." I need the cross of Jesus in order to deal with what the Bible calls my "hidden" and "unknown" sins.

All of these things are beyond my wisdom and ability; and I need God.

### Our Own Informal Motto:

Since our congregation is named "Friends in Christ Lutheran Church," we have (kind of drifted into having) this motto: "We're Not That Good; But We Have a Friend Who Is." His name is Jesus.

*Rev Mark Willig*

(As of writing this, we have no idea how long the battery fire will burn or how long the evacuation will last – but . . . "In God We Trust" .)



(We will **NOT** be meeting in July . . .)

Mark your calendar:

### The LWML FALL RALLY

Saturday, October 16, 2021

8:30 am – 11:30 am

St. Luke's Lutheran Church


(63 Fernwood Road, Montgomery, IL 60538)

Taken from the Northern Illinois District "Ministry Update" Spring, 2021

# Prayer Calendar

## JULY 2021



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				Please pray daily for Pastor Willig, Deb Carter, Kris Farber and their families. Pray for Missionaries, Deaf Ministry, Doctors, Nurses and anyone working in the medical field, Police, Fire and EMT's. Those working everywhere.	Lord, give us words to say to build each other up in the faith. Shore us up as a congregation help each of us to boldly share Your Word.	We pray Lord that You would continue to use Your people when tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, fire or any disaster strikes to reassure in the time of suffering that You are present with them in their time of need.
We thank you Lord for the many freedoms we enjoy as citizens of the United States. We ask that You would preserve these freedoms here and around the world.	Lord open the hearts and minds of people all over the world, so that His grace-filled message can spread far and wide.	Many Missionaries work for People of the Book Lutheran Outreach by trying to bring Muslims to know You Lord. Open hearts and minds of those needing to hear Your Word. Protect, guide, give an extra measure of safety to those sharing Your Word.	We pray for Pastor Willig. Shore him up physically, mentally, and spiritually. Strengthen his faith as he is a light for You to all he comes in contact with.	Lord, help LCMS congregations that are struggling in anyway, provide the resources necessary to help these congregations undergo a significant and lasting revitalization.	Lord, so many coming home from war suffer from battle stress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. We ask that You would bring healing and renewal to them. Strengthen them as well as their families. Bless them Lord.	Lord be with Christians all over the world who are in danger. Protect them from harm and danger, give them strength and faith to face their trails.
Lord, help us to always look compassionately on the least among us.	Lord, help us not to become complacent in the work You called us to do in our communities.	There is such a need for deaf ministry all over the world. We ask that You raise up congregations to provide a much needed place to hear Your Word in a little different way.	God, strengthen our faith by encouraging us to study and learn Your Word.	God, make us bold witnesses to the Good News in our homes and communities.	Lord, be with chaplains in harms way. We ask that You would not let their hearts despair nor their faith fall them, but sustain, guide and comfort them. Help them to be bold and proclaim Your word to all who can hear it. Open hearts and minds to hear and believe.	Lord, we pray for missionaries everywhere that they are protected and strengthen their faith as they plant the seeds of the Gospel. Help the Word they plant to continue to bear much fruit.
Lord, help me to make every effort to do what leads to peace. Romans 14:19	Lord help me to develop a servant's heart, that I may serve wholeheartedly. Eph. 6:7	Lord, may I regard Your Word as more precious than gold and sweeter than honey. Psalm 19:10	I ask that You keep me committed to prayer. Help me to pray first then do. Luke 18:1	Heavenly Father, grant me a heart filled with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. 1 Thess. 1:6	God, help me develop strong self esteem rooted in the realization that I am Your workmanship. Eph. 2:10	Create in me a pure heart, O God, and let that purity of heart be shown in my life. Psalm 51:10
Lord, I pray my soul would pant for You as a deer pants for streams of water. Psalm 42:1	Lord, may I always be strong and courageous in my character and their actions. Deut. 31:6	God, help me to love justice as you do and act justly in all I do. Psalm 11:7 Micah 6:8	Lord, I pray I would be rich in good deeds, generous, and willing to share. 1 Timothy 2:18	I pray that I would fearlessly make known the Gospel of Christ to others. Eph. 6:19	Lord, teach me to persevere in all I do, and help me run with perseverance, the race set before me. Hebrews 12:1	God bless all who are battling those inner demons of depression, loneliness, unworthiness and hopelessness. Please help them through each day.

# July, 2021 – Friends in Christ Lutheran Church, Morris, Illinois

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Dates in August:</b> <b>8/8 10:30 AM – Voters' Assembly</b>				1	2	3 <b>COMMUNION</b> 5:30 PM –Worship
<b>4 COMMUNION</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost 9:30 AM – Worship & Live-Streamed 10:30 AM – Bible Study Hour	5	6 <del>9:00 AM – No Bible Study</del> 7:00 PM – Elders	7	8	9	10 5:30 PM –Worship
11 7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost 9:30 AM – Worship & Live-Streamed 10:30 AM – Bible Study Hour	12	13 9:00 AM – Bible Study	14	15	16	17 <b>COMMUNION</b> 5:30 PM –Worship
18 <b>COMMUNION</b> 8 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost 9:30 AM – Worship & Live-Streamed 10:30 AM – Bible Study Hour	19	20 9:00 AM – Bible Study	21	22 7:00 PM – Church Council <<Interpreted <<International	23 Ministries Lutheran	24 5:30 PM –Worship  Conference>> Deaf Association
25 9 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 AM – Worship 10:30 AM – Bible Study Hour  Conference in Elk Grove Village>> <<Ephphatha Pastors of the Deaf	26  Conference>>	27 9:00 AM – Bible Study	28	29	30	31 <b>COMMUNION</b> 5:30 PM –Worship