

**Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church**

717 Stover Ave, PO box 637

Milledgeville, IL 61051

Phone: 815-225-7410

**Partner in Cooperative Ministry**

First Lutheran West Jordan

**N. IL. Synod of the ELCA**

Ministers

**The People of God**

Pastor **Rev. Susan Davenport**

Secretary **Janet Barkley**

Organist **Nancy Janssen**



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**Trinity Lutheran Church  
Milledgeville, IL**



**And  
First Lutheran of  
Jordan, Sterling, IL**



# Pentecost Sunday – May 28, 2023.

**But what is Pentecost?** It's not like Pentecost is a word that we use much outside of church. Unlike some other Christian holy days, it hasn't leaked into popular culture. You won't find new stories about the "War on Pentecost" – there's no tradition of gift giving (and the accompanying sales) around Pentecost. You aren't even likely to find an increase in chocolate sales to go with the holiday.

**The Basics of Pentecost:** Pentecost Sunday is the day when Christians around the world celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit.

On Christmas, Christians celebrate the Incarnation – the idea that God became human in the person of Jesus Christ. On Easter, Christians celebrate the Resurrection – the belief that Jesus rose from the dead, a sign of the promise of resurrection given to all God's people.

And on Pentecost, we celebrate the Holy Spirit – the gift of God's comfort, power, and strength given to God's people.

## **The History of Pentecost:**

In the Hebrew Scripture, the Jewish people celebrated a holiday known as the "Festival of Weeks" (see Exodus 32 and Deuteronomy 16). This was a harvest festival, a time when the Israelites celebrate the generosity of God, shown in a successful harvest of grain.

While the Temple stood in Jerusalem, each farmer would bring their *first fruits* – the first ripe samples from their fields – and give them as an offering of thanksgiving in the Temple. This meant that many Jews from all across the countryside would gather in Jerusalem in order to present their offering at the Temple.

The Festival of Weeks happened fifty days after the Passover. For this reason, the Greek-speaking Jews of the first century called the festival "Pentecost" – from the Greek word meaning "fiftieth day."

It was during the Festival of Weeks, fifty days after Passover, that the disciples of Jesus were gathered in Jerusalem. They had spent the last fifty days making sense of their experiences of the resurrection of their teacher, Jesus, and the fact that he had just ascended into heaven (for this whole account, see the book of Acts, chapters 1 and 2).

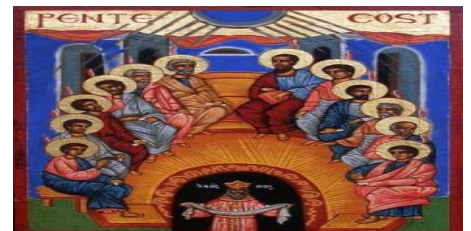
While the disciples were gathered, the Holy Spirit filled them. They began to tell to the pilgrims who were gathered in Jerusalem about Jesus. As they preached they were amazed to discover that all the pilgrims – regardless of what language they spoke – were able to understand them.

The Christian holiday of Pentecost is rooted in this historical event – an event sometimes called the "birthday of the church" because it marks the day that Jesus' disciples began to share the story of Jesus and invite others to share in their faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

But Pentecost is more than just remembering a historical event. On Pentecost, we invite the same Spirit that filled the disciples that day to transform our lives. Even more important than looking backward and remembering what God did two thousand years ago, we look forward and invite the Spirit to pull us into the future.

The Holy Spirit has a way of turning things upside down. The story of Acts is all about how the lives of the disciples got turned upside down – and by extension, how the world turned upside down by this new, Spirit-filled faith.

On Pentecost we invite this disruptive presence of God into our own lives. The fruit of the Spirit, says Paul, is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These are what we seek to live into, how we seek to transform the world, and the evidence of the Spirit at work in our lives and in the world.





# Pentecost Word Search



T W E L V E F R U I T S R P Q  
 Y C G Y A D N U S T I H W E H  
 A O N S T R E N G T H E N N R  
 D U I S T S O H G Y L O H T R  
 H N D T T K A P R E A C H E T  
 T S N T I F N P W P V R F C T  
 R E A I H R I O O I I X G O Y  
 I L T M T I I G W S S E B S F  
 B C S X M C R P N L T D T T I  
 E H R J M Q E D S E E L O Y T  
 C R E E L B A N E Y V D E M C

APOSTLES  
 CHURCH  
 ENABLE  
 GRACE  
 KNOWLEDGE  
 PREACH  
 STRENGTHEN  
 UNDERSTANDING  
 BIRTHDAY  
 COUNSEL  
 FEAROFHELORD  
 HOLYGHOST

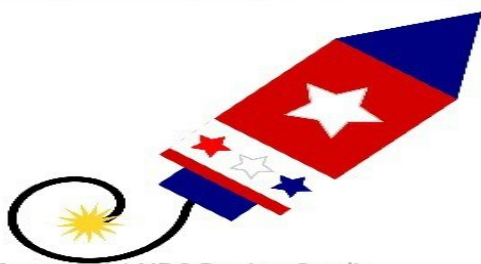
PENTECOST  
 SANCTIFY  
 THIRD  
 WHITSUNDAY  
 CHRIST  
 DESCENT  
 FORTITUDE  
 HOLYSPIRIT  
 PIETY  
 SEVENGIFTS  
 TWELVEFRUITS  
 WISDOM

# 4th of July

Word Search

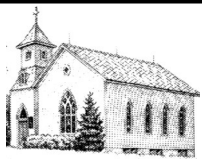


X P F C G D S B S I R D J S I  
 D A M E R I C A S U E S D T N  
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 U A Y E N F Q B F S W S K R E  
 V D R B S H S E I O H G K S P  
 D E E R R Y I Q R H I R K A E  
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 T P G U S A O I G I L E S P W  
 Y I O E R G Q W G K U W X E Q  
 M U N C L E S A M Z E E E S S



America  
 Barbeque  
 Celebration  
 Fireworks  
 Flag  
 Freedom  
 Independence

Liberty  
 Parade  
 Red White and Blue  
 Stars and Stripes  
 Uncle Sam  
 USA



## West Jordan

### Worship Helpers

#### **Alter care, communion assistant, Ushers**

**June 4th & 11th** Dan & Jodi Woessner

Lector Dan Woessner

**June 18th, & 25th** Al Vickers

Lector June Purvis

**July 2nd & 9th** open

Lector

**July 16th, 23rd & 30th** open

Lector

### **In our prayers:**

#### **From First:**

Roger Hinrichs, Ramon Woessner, Dodie Whitmer,  
Rhonda Ramirez, Debbie Howlett, Dick Bushman,  
Olivia Crossman, Bob Woessner,  
Polly Adams, Charlene Lane,  
Frank Lazansky, Roxanne Klein, and Lloyd Mull

#### **From Trinity:**

Lori Anderson, Bill Borth, Jim Brubaker,  
Dick Bushman, Shirley Cheeseman, Tom Cleary,  
Betty Dettman, Chet Gerdes,  
Larry & Mary Gerdes, Amanda Smith  
Roger Hinrichs, Dick Janssen, Jonathan Lenhart  
Joyce Lancaster, Mikey Remmers,  
Sandy Skinner, Shirley & Bob Woessner.  
Pam LaBarron, Roberta Moseley

## **Grace Meals**

### **At Trinity Lutheran Church**

**Will be June 20th at 11:30**

**Menu will be**

**Hot slider sandwiches, potato salad, dessert.**



**Come and enjoy.**

**Also on**

**July 18th at 11:30**

**We will have**

**Brats, Hotdogs, and**

**Salads, Chips, Desserts**

### **Trinity will be participating in**

**Milledgeville Jamboree Community Worship**

**on June 4th at the Methodist Church parking lot (weather permitting/ or indoors). Bring**

**a lawn chair and enjoy . Service is at**

**10:00 am**

**Pastor Susan will be on vacation**

**June 5th through June 11th.**

**Enjoy your time off.**

### **Our Southtown Ministry**

**Will be Tuesday, June 20th. And July 18th at 4:30**

Lynn Kaufman, Jodi Woessner &  
Greg Kruse, leaders

### Church Leaders Directory

#### **Trinity Lutheran Church**

President Tammy Miller  
Vice-President Kevin Anderson  
Secretary Sharon Woodard  
Treasurer Donna Landis  
At-Large Ken Peterson  
Lori Oncken  
Jim Brubaker  
Custodian Lynn Kaufman  
Musician Nancy Janssen  
Financial Secretary Ken Peterson

#### **First Lutheran West Jordan**

President Jan Wetzel (815-631-9353)  
Secretary Jodi Woessner

Pastor, Rev. Susan Davenport  
563-613-3892

Church Secretary Janet Barkley  
Church # 815-225-7410 Cell# 815-590-0520

## How to get what you need at Trinity Lutheran/First Lutheran Church's

### Emergency Pastoral Care Concern?

Hospitalizations, Illness,  
Family Crisis

Call Pr. Susan Davenport at  
Cell phone # 563-613-3892

Do **NOT** rely on the hospital to  
contact the church.

Do **NOT** rely on word of mouth/  
The grapevine.

Do **NOT** rely on mindreading skills.  
Pastor missed that class in seminary.

### Non—Urgent

#### Pastoral Needs?

Scheduling a home visit/baptism/  
wedding. Confirmation/Christian Ed,  
Coffee & Conversation

Leave a message at Trinity for Pr. Susan.  
She will return it as soon as possible.

#### E-mail Pastor Susan

[pastorsusan678@gmail.com](mailto:pastorsusan678@gmail.com)

### Questions about

#### Administrative stuff?

Announcements for the bulletin, ques-  
tions about schedules, Financial ques-  
tions, hall rental, etc....

Call the Church and leave a message for  
Janet on the Church answering machine,  
for her to return during office hours

815-225-7410 or E-mail Janet at  
[telcsecretary@mediacommbb.net](mailto:telcsecretary@mediacommbb.net)

Contact a council member

## No Sewing at Trinity during June and July



Food  
Pantry

**June 6th, 2023**

9:00 to 11:00 AM

6:00 to 8:00 pm

**July 11th, 2023**

9:00 to 11:00 AM

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Outdoor  
Worship  
Service



**JUNE 25th**

Will be the Annual  
Outside Joint Worship  
at trinity.

Weather permitting it  
will be out under the  
tree.

After the outdoors worship we will gather  
in the social hall for a pot luck brunch.  
Come and worship enjoy some social time.

## Trinity Lutheran Web Page & Facebook Service

The web page has the most current Newsletter plus the last

10 years of annual reports. Web Page is found at [www.trinitymville.com](http://www.trinitymville.com)

Facebook where all the Sunday Services can be viewed if you can't make  
it to church. You would have to have Facebook account on your comput-  
er, laptop, tablet or phone. Just "Like" [Trinity Lutheran Church  
Milledgeville](https://www.facebook.com/TrinityLutheranChurchMilledgeville), to view the church's Facebook page and you can view the  
service. And get other post from Trinity Facebook page.

## DISCOVER THE MIRACLE OF CREATION IN A STREAM

Saturday, June 3 at 10:00 am

at Spring Creek on the Soderholm Prairie

7578 W. Pines Road, Mt. Morris, 61054

815-973-8011

Trinity Lutheran council meeting

Will be July 23rd

After Church

Blessed  
is the nation  
whose  
**GOD**  
is the LORD.  
~ Psalm 33:12

Independence Day

If **MY PEOPLE**  
who are called by my name  
will **HUMBLE** themselves  
★ and **PRAY** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
★ and **SEEK** my face  
★ and **TURN** from their wicked ways,  
then will I **HEAR** from heaven  
and will **FORGIVE** their sin  
and will **HEAL** their land.  
2 Chronicles 7:14



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
28	29	30	31	1 Steven Blake's birthday June Purvis birthday	2 Carole Adolph's birthday	3	
 <b>Community Worship Services</b> Church at United Methodist Church 9:00 am	4	5	6 Arlyn Hinrich's birthday	7 Dan and Heather Schmidt's anniversary	8	9 Kurt Landis's birthday	10
11 Robert and Marlys Carpenter's anniversary Worship FWJ 8:30; Trinity 10:15	12	13 Ava Schluter's birthday Brady Doyle's birthday	14	15 Lyla Anderson,'s birthday	16 Pastor Susan Davenport's birthday  NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD SYNOD ASSEMBLY JUNE 16-17, 2023	17	
18 Worship & Communion FWJ 8:30; Trinity 10:15	19 Marlys Carpenter's birthday	20	21 Thomas and Stephanie Barkley's anniversary	22 Justin Peterson's birthday	23	24	
25 Caleb VanDyke's birthday Jerry Heeren's birthday Trudy Landeer's birthday Joint Outdoors Worship @ 9:00 Brunch to follow worship	26 Andrew and Janet Barkley's anniversary Jenn Dettman's birthday	27	28 Mark and Jenn Dettman's anniversary	29	30 Michael and Taylor Battles's anniversary Mike Miller's birthday	1 Robert and Shirley Woessner's anniversary	

## June Daily Prayer

**Jun 1st**—Creator God, give us room to breathe your Spirit and to rest, but for a moment, in your love. Amen

**Jun 2nd**— Creator God, lead us to experience the wonder of all of your children. Amen

**Jun 3rd**— God of life, thank you for being with us in our sleeping, our waking, and every moment in between. Amen

**Jun 4th**— Lord Jesus, find us in our worship and our doubting, and blee the tension between them. Amen

**Jun 5th**— God of presence, speak strength and peace to us today, that we might know you are near. Amen

**Jun 6th**- Holy Spirit, help us to discern and share the gifts you have already given us in Jesus' name. Amen

**Jun 7th** - Holy Spirit, remind us again of all the we have and all that we are in the name of Jesus. Amen

**Jun 8th**— God of grace, by your Holy Spirit guide us into the way of peace. Amen

**Jun 9th**— God of light, grow us into the beloved people you created us to be in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

**Jun 10th**— God, help us trade the burden of our productivity for the grace you give through our Lord Jesus. Amen

**Jun 11th**—Lord, teach us to be present with one another in the name of and with the mercy of Jesus. Amen

**Jun 12th**—Holy God, find us today and surprise us with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

**Jun 13th**—Help us, Lord, to imitate our Lord Jesus with Love, care, and compassion for all people. Amen.

**Jun 14th**—Guide us, O Lord over, under, and around the obstacles of life. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen

**Jun 15th**— God, speak grace and peace into the uncertain spaces of our lives, though Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**Jun 16th**— Gracious God, thank you for your goodness to humanity and all creation. In Jesus' name. Amen

**Jun 17th**— Faithful God, thank you for granting us your hope that sustains us through any heartbreak. Amen

**Jun 18th**—Caring God, you enter our suffering wit loving compassion. Teach us to do likewise. In Christ name we pray. Amen.

**Jun 19th** Liberating God, grant us courage. Inspire us to live for peace and freedom for all. Amen

**Jun 20th**—God, thank you for calling us by name and uniting us as a family through the baptismal waters. Amen.

**Jun 21st**—Wonderful Goa, we praise you with singing for your extravagant love and your marvelous works. Amen

**Jun 22nd**—Holy God, thank you for your powerful word that burns within our bones. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Jun 23rd**—God, please remove my attachment to sins that separate me from you and my neighbor's. Amen.

**Jun 24th**— God, help me to remember to trust in you, like John the Baptist did. In Jesus' name. Amen

**Jun 25th**— God, help me to let go of the things that keep me from service to you and your creation. Thank you. Amen

**Jun 26th**—God, move me by your Spirit to come to you in prayer, confident of your love and help. Amen.

**Jun 27th**— God, help me accept the truth about myself, along with your forgiveness, love, and salvation. Amen

**Jun 28th**— God, help me to be generous. In Jesus' name. Amen

**Jun 29th**— God, thank you for the gift of prayer. In Jesus name. Amen

**Jun 30th**— God, help me to accept the things I cannot change, and to trust your grace even when things feel hopeless. Amen.

# June

## Daily Devotions



<b>Jun 1st</b>	Genesis 1:1—2:4a
<b>Jun 2nd</b>	Psalm 8
<b>Jun 3rd</b>	2 Corinthians 13:11-13
<b>Jun 4th</b>	Matthew 28:16-20
<b>Jun 5th</b>	Psalm 29
<b>Jun 6th</b>	1 Corinthians 12:4-13
<b>Jun 7th</b>	John 14:125-26
<b>Jun 8th</b>	Hosea 5:15—6:6
<b>Jun 9th</b>	Psalm 50:7-15
<b>Jun 10th</b>	Romans 4:13-25
<b>Jun 11th</b>	Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26
<b>Jun 12th</b>	Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3
<b>Jun 13th</b>	Hebrews 13:1-16
<b>Jun 14th</b>	Hosea 14:1-9
<b>May 15th</b>	Exodus 19:2-8a
<b>Jun 16th</b>	Psalm 100
<b>Jun 17th</b>	Romans 5:1-8
<b>Jun 18th</b>	Matthew 9:35—10:23
<b>Jun 19th</b>	Joshua 1:1-11
<b>Jun 20th</b>	1Samual 3:1-9
<b>Jun 21st</b>	Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
<b>Jun 22nd</b>	Jeremiah 20:7-13
<b>Jun 23rd</b>	Romans 6:1b-11
<b>Jun 24th</b>	Luke 1:57-67(68-80)
<b>Jun 25th</b>	Matthew 10:24-39
<b>Jun 26th</b>	Psalm 6
<b>Jun 27th</b>	Jeremiah 26:1-12
<b>Jun 28th</b>	Matthew 10:5-23
<b>Jun 29th</b>	Acts 12:1-11
<b>Jun 30th</b>	Jeremiah 28:5-9

LOVE ONE ANOTHER  
as I have loved you.

# JULY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<p>Have a safe 4<sup>th</sup> of July</p>				<p>1 Robert and Shirley Woessner's anniversary</p>
<p>2 Worship &amp; Communion FWJ 8:30; Trinity 10:15</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 Brenda Harris's birthday</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 Jocelyn Green's birthday</p>	<p>7 Ruth Bryson's birthday</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9 Worship FWJ 8:30; Trinity 10:15</p>	<p>10 Amy Eye's birthday Beth Dettman's birthday Stan Franks's birthday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Carol Frederick's birthday</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 Joseph and Rebecca Green's anniversary</p>
<p>16 Worship &amp; Communion FWJ 8:30; Trinity 10:15</p>	<p>17 <b>TRINITY</b></p>	<p>18 Lou Adolph's birthday Grace meals At 11:30</p> <p><b>DELIVERS</b></p>	<p>19 <b>MEALS</b></p>	<p>20 <b>THIS</b></p>	<p>21 <b>WEEK</b></p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23 Worship FWJ 8:30; Trinity 10:15 Council meeting After church At Trinity</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 Asher Battles's birthday</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30 Worship FWJ 8:30; Trinity 10:15</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1 Nick and Haley Hughes's anniversary</p>				



## July Daily Prayer

**Jul 1st**—Lord, bring mw again into your life, and let me serve you with freedom and joy in Jesus’ name. Amen

**Jul 2nd**—Lord, teach me to give and receive the gift of welcome in your spirit, in the name of Jesus. Amen

**Jul 3rd**— Jesus, my way, my truth, my life: guide my feet guide my life. Amen

**Jul 4th**— God, lead me in civic life, that your love would reign in all things. Through Jesus I pray. Amen

**Jul 5th**— Lord, show me if there is anything you need me to change my mind about today. In Jesus’ name. Amen

**Jul 6th**—God, shape my life after yours, in solidarity with those you love. In Jesus’ name. Amen

**Jul 7th** - Holy Lord, I declare that you are worthy of my full attention. Shape me in the way of Jesus. Amen

**Jul 8th**— Jesus, reveal the patterns you want to transform in my life, and help me take up your ways in their place. Amen

**Jul 9th**— Lord, in your name, help us to know the Father as you knew and trusted the Father. Amen

**Jul 10th**—Creative God, help us acknowledge you each time we see your fingerprints in the natural world. Amen

**Jul 11th**—Morthering God, wean my soul so that I may feed on mature spiritual food. Amen

**Jul 12th**—Lord, show me who and how you would have me serve you today. Amen

**Jul 13th**—O lord, may our lives sing with your creation. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

**Jul 14th**—Gardner God, help us to participate in your good harvest here on earth. Amen

**Jul 15th**— O God, forgive me when I fear you. Help me to live in your boundless love. Amen

**Jul 16th**— Farmer God, cultivate good soil in us today so your word may bear good fruit. Amen

**Jul 17th**— Keep us strong in our faith, O lord, always seeking direction from you. Amen

**Jul 18th**—Giver of life, thank you for taking our sin and remembering it no more. In Jesus we pray. Amen.

**Jul 19th** Creator God, with Isaiah and the psalmist, we stand in awe of your majesty and your limitless love. Amen

**Jul 20th**—No matter where I am carried today, O Lord, let me sense your great love for me. Amen.

**Jul 21st**—Jesus, help me breathe deeply today and with each breath feel your calming presence. Amen

**Jul 22nd**—Lord, thank you for empowering Mary Magdalene to share your good news. Please empower me too. Amen.

**Jul 23rd**—Through my words, my actions and my deeds, O Lord, help me to plant good seed today. Amen.

**Jul 24th**— Dear God, help me be forever grateful for my undeserved blessings from your hands. Amen

**Jul 25th**— Jesus, give me a servant’s heart, that others may see you through me. Amen

**Jul 26th**—Jesus, use me today to share God’s healing love with someone in need. Amen.

**Jul 27th**— God of wisdom, as you guide our lives, give us patience with ourselves and the will to grow. Amen

**Jul 28th**— O Lord, thank you for bringing me back when I stray from the path you set before me. Amen

**Jul 29th**— Today, O Lord, I cling to your promise that nothing can separate me from your love. Amen

**Jul 30th**— God, give me courage to work in life-giving ways that reveal your kingdom. Amen

**Jul 31st**— Saving God, your love for us goes beyond words. Help us share it with others. Amen



<b>Jul 1st</b>	Romans 6:12-23
<b>Jul 2nd</b>	Matthew 10:40-42
<b>Jul 3rd</b>	John 14:1-7
<b>Jul 4th</b>	1 John 4:1-6
<b>Jul 5th</b>	Jeremiah 18:1-11
<b>Jul 6th</b>	Zechariah 9:9-12
<b>Jul 7th</b>	Psalms 145:8-14
<b>Jul 8th</b>	Romans 7:15-25a
<b>Jul 9th</b>	Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
<b>Jul 10th</b>	Romans 1:18-25
<b>Jul 11th</b>	Psalms 131
<b>Jul 12th</b>	John 13:1-17
<b>Jul 13th</b>	Isaiah 55:10-13
<b>Jul 14th</b>	Psalms 65:[1-8] 9-13
<b>Jul 15th</b>	Romans 8:1-11
<b>Jul 16th</b>	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
<b>Jul 17th</b>	1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
<b>Jul 18th</b>	Deuteronomy 28:1-14
<b>Jul 19th</b>	Isaiah 44:6-8
<b>Jul 20th</b>	Psalms 86:11-17
<b>Jul 21st</b>	Romans 8:12-25
<b>Jul 22nd</b>	John 20:1-2, 11-18
<b>Jul 23rd</b>	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
<b>Jul 24th</b>	Psalms 75
<b>Jul 25th</b>	Mark 10:35-45
<b>Jul 26th</b>	Matthew 12:15-21
<b>Jul 27th</b>	1 Kings 3:5-12
<b>Jul 28th</b>	Psalms 119:129-136
<b>Jul 29th</b>	Romans 8:26-39
<b>Jul 30th</b>	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
<b>Jul 31st</b>	1 Kings 3:16-28



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH Of West Jordan  
20314 Hickory Hills Road  
Sterling, IL 61081  
815-225-7410  
Worship: Sundays 8:30 AM



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
717 Stover Ave, PO Box 637  
Milledgeville, IL 61051  
815-225-7410; telcsecretary@mediacombb.net  
Worship: Sundays 10:15 AM



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*"<sup>19</sup>For it is to your credit if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly." --1 Peter 2: 19*

To be a Christian in the world means running a tough course and having a hard climb ahead. Obstacle courses, by their very nature, are challenging simply by virtue of the terrain or hazards along the way. This is a given.

But, in addition to the adversities built into such courses, one might encounter other problems, either on a course, or even in a gym while training to get fit enough to get out on the course.

Ever fall off a treadmill? Embarrassing.

Ever get out on a course, and while bending or stretching, a seam tears? Embarrassing.

Or worse: you're exercising with a group of people on mats at the gym, following a leader or a video, and suddenly, with absolutely no warning, you pass gas. What do you do? Pretend it didn't happen. Accuse someone else? Embarrassing.

Sometimes, in the course of accepting the challenges of life, things can get embarrassing. But the cool part is that sometimes, it is through no fault of our own. It's life. We move on.

Jesus provides an example for those who would follow him. Running the race isn't about staying on the sidelines, bypassing obstacles or retaliating against those who hurt or embarrass us, but about running with perseverance knowing the ultimate goal. For Jesus, that goal was saving the very world that crucified him. For his followers, it is doing our best to join him in that race.

In a world that is increasingly hostile to people of faith, it takes a certain amount of guts to want to engage in the obstacle course of discipleship. It would be easy to quit, to forgo the obstacles or to merely stand on the sidelines.

Peter, however, urges us to run with boldness, being patient in suffering and being an example to others in our conduct. Jesus navigated these obstacles all the way to the bitter end and ends up on top of the world at the right hand of the Father.

This summer, remember to follow his example, to lean into the hard stuff, and keep your eyes on the finish line! Remember to worship, pray and be in touch with your community of faith, which is God's way of strengthening us for the journey.

Peace,

Pastor Susan