

RIVER OF LIFE *STREAMS*

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"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

Psalm 33:12

The Fourth of July - also known as Independence Day – has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1941.

From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American Independence, with festivities ranging from fireworks, parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues. The Fourth of July 2023 is on a Tuesday. The recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance is usually included in the big public July 4th celebrations.

The original version of the Pledge was written in 1887, it read: "I pledge allegiance to my flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible – with liberty and justice for all. It was revised by Francis Bellamy in 1892. The pledge was first recited in American schools on Oct. 12, 1892. It was formally adopted by the Congress as the pledge in 1942. In 1943 The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that requiring a person to say the pledge is a violation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution.

When I was in grade school in the 1940's, I went to a larger Christian Day School. Each morning the whole school gathered outside, facing the flag. It was Texas so we could gather outside all year The ceremony began with an Invocation and continued with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Hymn and concluded with Prayer.

Joan went to a public all-girls high school in New Jersey in the 1950's. Elizabeth had an all-boys and all-girls high school. Every class began the day in the classroom with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Lord's Prayer. How was the Pledge of Allegiance used in your school? Some of you may remember similar experiences.

On Flag Day, June 14, 1954, at the request of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Congress added "under God" to the pledge. While various jurisdictions have ruled against the "under God" phrase. no such action has been taken by the Supreme Court.

We are living in uncertain times. Our nation's three branches of government have uninvolved themselves from God and have gone the way of the majority of the world. The path of happiness for man is sought in his own ideas and desires. Removing God's name from our government, and schools and society, flies in the face of God's Word. Psalm 33:12 says, ***"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."***

We are thankful for many blessings God has given us living in the United States of America, especially our freedom to worship God as we choose to do. Compared to much of the world, we have an abundance, But, as Christians, we are concerned about the current movement toward a godless society.

Psalm 33:12 is the verse in the heading. Reading the whole Psalm has some good advice for us as Christians in regard to our country. You might wish to read the whole Psalm.

verses 1-5 Return to praising the Lord.
verses. 6-9 Recognize God as our Creator.
verses -10-15 . . . Remember God is interested in our affairs.
verses 16-15 Rely on God for safety
verse 22 Repent! Pray to the Lord for mercy.

May God keep us thankful for our blessings and strong in faith in our Lord and Savior.
Pastor Mitschke

The leadership of River of Life has scheduled a short congregational meeting for July 16, 2023, immediately following the service. The one agenda item will be if the congregation wants to continue to explore a partnership with Friends in Christ in Morris, Illinois, with the possibility of calling a Pastor to serve both churches. Our delegation at a District 17 meeting in March met with the delegation of Friends in Christ and exchanged information so we could start the process. Since that time, our leadership has met with the leadership of Friends in Christ once at River of Life and once at Friends in Christ to discuss the possibility of a partnership. At the last meeting, it was voted unanimously by both churches leaders to continue to meet and move forward with the partnership. At that time, it was recommended by our Circuit Visitor Pastor Ryden that we hold a congregational meeting to have all members vote on moving forward with the partnership. There is still work to be done to determine what the partnership would look like and then calling a pastor. Our next scheduled meeting is on July 25, 2023, between the Friends in Christ call committee and the River of Life call committee. I hope to see you at the July 16th congregational meeting and if you have any questions, please contact one of the elders or a member of the church council. Continue to pray for the future of River of Life and our sister congregation, Friends in Christ.

Yours in Christ,
David D. Hall
Head Elder, River of Life LCMS



For the next four Sundays in July, the sermon texts will be from the Epistle for the Day from the Book of Romans. I trust you will find this series profitable and interesting.

Dr. Martin Luther said of the Book of Romans. This Book "is really the chief part of the New Testament and the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul."

July 2 – Communion Pentecost 5
"A Sword, A Cross, and A Life"
Matthew 10:38-42

July 9 - Worship Pentecost 6
"The Struggles" (Law and Sin)

July 16 - Communion. Pentecost 7
"The Need to Belong"
(Children of God – and So We Are)

Congregational Meeting after service

July 23 – Worship Pentecost 8
"What's Ahead?"
(*You Haven't Seen Nuthin' Yet*)

July 30 – Communion Pentecost 9
"God's Everlasting Love"

(Nothing Can Separate Us)



Thanks to **Doris Anderson** and **Joanne Morris** for their service on the Altar Guild and faithfully setting up and putting away our Communion vessels and elements each week.

***Thanks to Pam Vermeulen for sending cards to our shut-ins
and those with medical issues!***



Judy Bremer

1215 Burns,
Minooka, IL 60447

Sandy Krause (No Cards at this time)

Silver Oaks
New Lenox

Bill Richardson

StoryPoint, Room 318 (new room number)
605 S. Edward Dr.
Romeoville, IL 60446

Vince Zitella

6105 E. Hilltop Dr.
Coal City, IL 60416

Julianne Grell

650 S. Broadway St. Apt. 2F
Coal City, IL 60416

Continued Prayers...

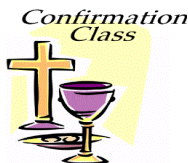
Pastor Mark Willig
Friends in Christ Lutheran Church
513 E Main Street, Morris, IL 60450

Pastor David Daniel
Zion Lutheran Church



Sunday School...

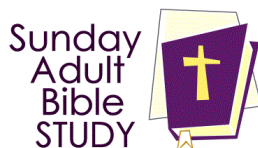
Sunday School is out for the Summer!



See or call Pastor Mitschke about Confirmation class.

Youth Group...

Plan on attending all events if possible, for some fellowship and to help our youth group!



Bible Study is out for the Summer!!



Chairman and 1 Usher – **Vacant** (If interested in serving, see Bob Grimm)

If you need to use the LIFT, let an Elder or Usher know to assist you!



Head Elder Dave Hall and the Elders have been in touch with Pastor Ryden and NID and are working with them in regard to looking for a pastor.



Churches in Circuit South 17

River of Life, Channahon
Our Savior, Joliet
St. Peter, Joliet
St. Paul's, Lockport

Trinity, Marseilles
Zion, Ottawa
Lord of Life, Seneca
Hope, Shorewood

The Northern Illinois District has eighteen Circuits. A circuit must have at least seven congregations and a minimum combined membership of 1,500.

Swaddling Clothes

Our outreach ministry for families!

Open on the 2nd Saturday, and the 4th Tuesday of each month.

July 8

9 am – 12 pm

Contact Amanda Graves for any questions.

July 25

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

If you're interested in helping, please contact Amanda Graves.

Contact Pam Sterle if you want to help some mornings.

The more, the merrier!

Please consider donating your time to this worthwhile ministry.

Help is always needed and appreciated.

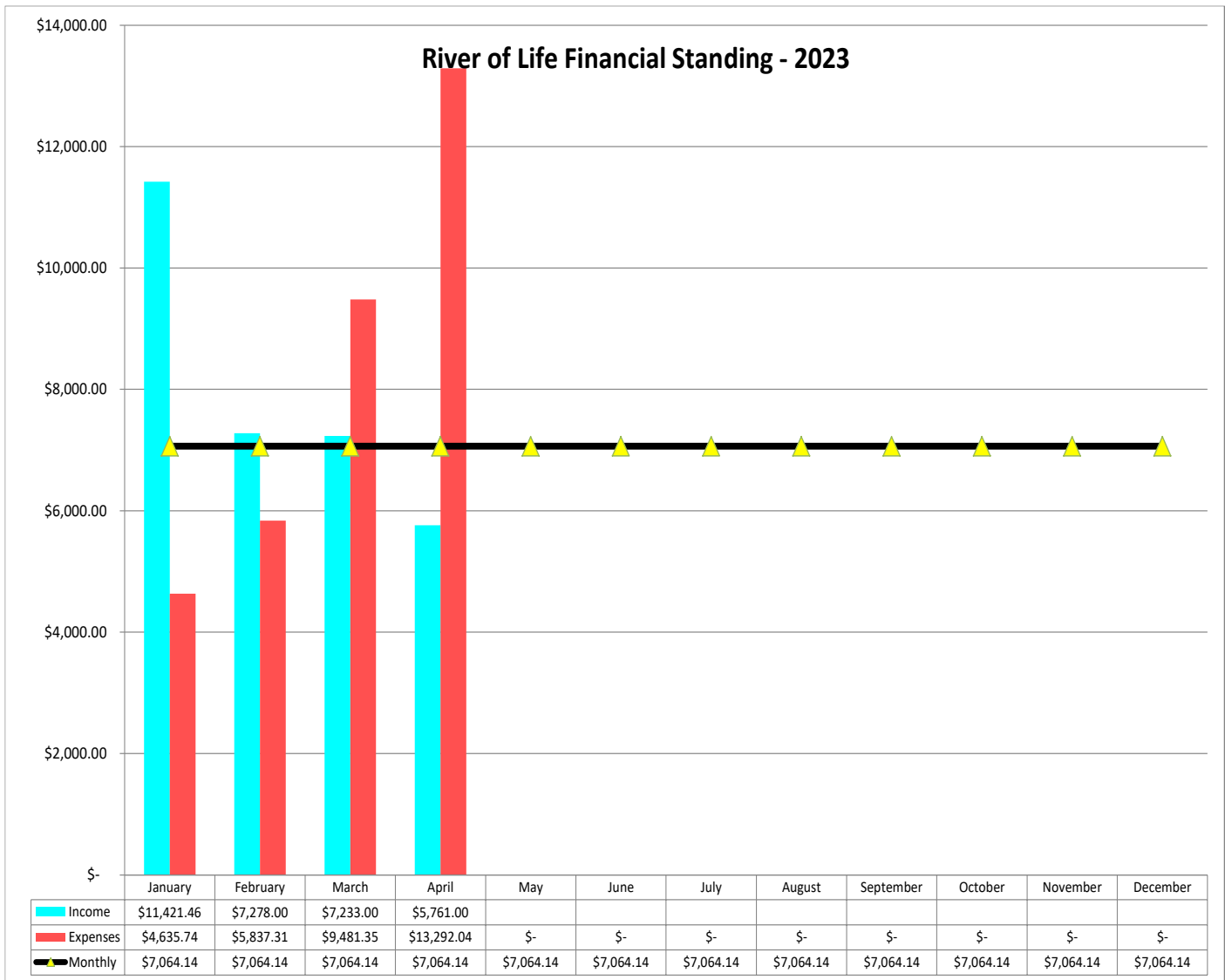
Donating to a charity using a qualified charitable distribution (QCD).

If you are age 72 or older, IRS rules require you to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) each year from your tax-deferred retirement accounts.

Learn how by taking your RMD as a QCD and donating directly to a charity it will not be considered as taxable income. (Consider River of Life Lutheran Church)

Check the website listed below for an explanation, or you can ask Vince on how it all works.

<https://www.fidelity.com/learning-center/personal-finance/retirement/qcds-the-basics>



Giving	\$ 31,693.46
Expenses	\$ 33,246.44
	\$ (1,552.98)



Holy *COMMUNION*

The Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood is received reverently among us.
With COVID-19, our reception of the Sacrament is still affected.

Social distancing is practiced coming forward. Communicants come to receive the Sacrament as singles or a family. As the first family/single leaves the Communion Table, the next single or family comes forward.

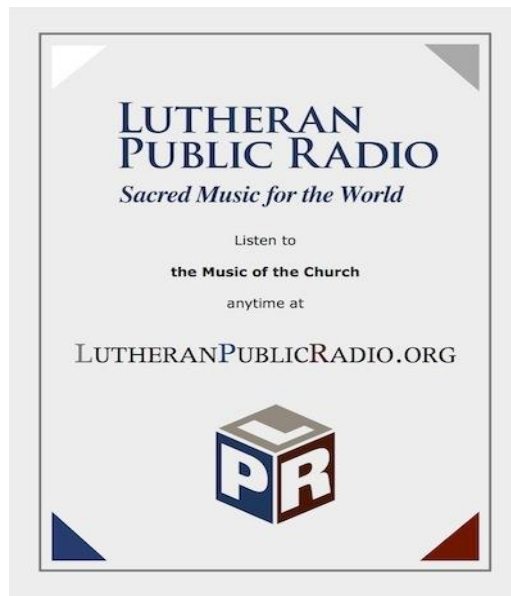
In our distribution of the wine and the bread in the Sacrament, there is now no contact between the pastor/elder and the people.

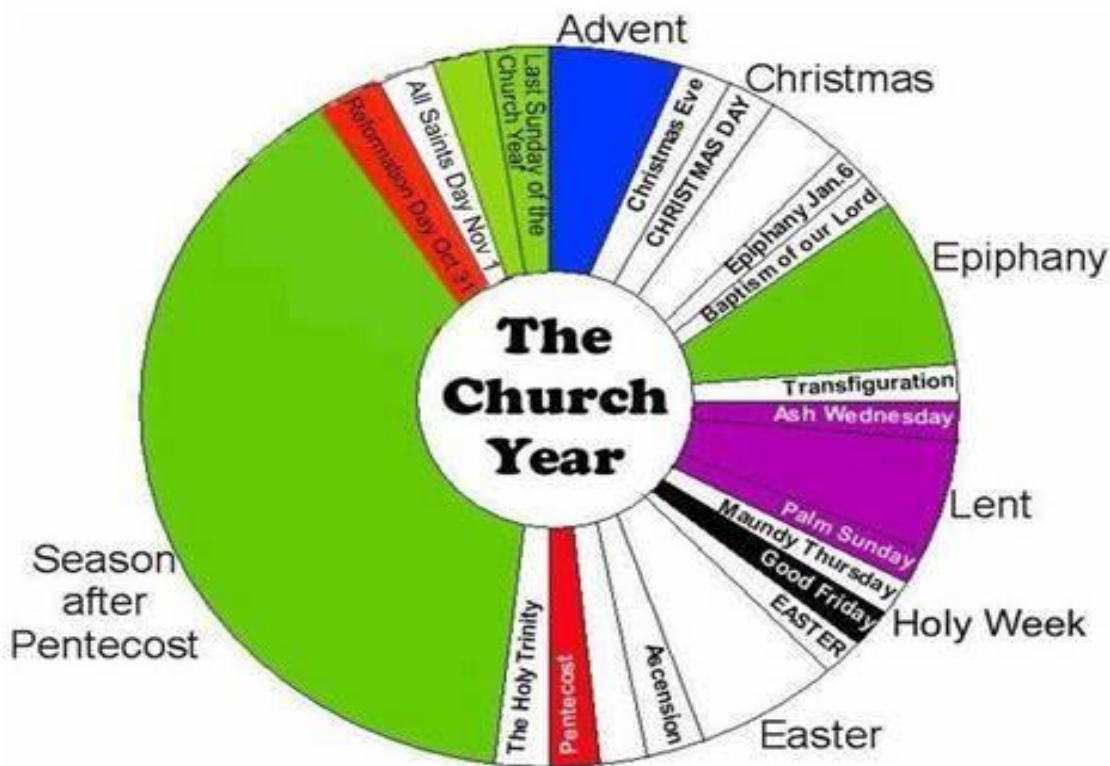
The bread and wine are in individual cups touched only by the communicant(s). As the pastor says, "*Take eat*" . . ., each communicant takes his own cup with bread, "*Take drink*" . . ., each communicant then takes his own cup with wine. The pastor then speaks the dismissal.

We followed suggestions and introduced these new precautions long ago. If you have comments or suggestions, please feel free to share them with an elder or pastor.

We appreciate the service of our Altar Guild for their beautiful service and add an extra thank you for their special work currently.

Dave Hall, Head Elder





What determines the changeable dates of The Church Year?

The date of Pentecost and dates of the seasons of Lent and Easter and *the Holy Days within those seasons* are *changeable*.

In 325 A.D., the Council of Nicaea established a formula for the date of Easter as the Sunday following the paschal full moon, which is the full moon that falls on or after the spring equinox. In practice, that means that Easter is always the first Sunday after the first full moon that falls on or after March 21. Easter can occur as early as March 22 and as late as April 25.

The paschal full moon can fall on different days in different time zones, which can present a problem when calculating the date of Easter. If people in different time zones were to calculate the date of Easter depending on when they observed the paschal full moon, then that would mean that the date of Easter would be different depending on which time zone they lived in. For that reason, the church does not use the exact date of the spring equinox but an approximation, March 21. The actual vernal equinox can occur on March 20th in certain time zones. For calculation purposes, the full moon is always set on the 14th day of the lunar month. The lunar month begins with the new moon. For the same reason, the church sets the date of the spring equinox at March 21. These two approximations allow the church to set a universal date for Easter, regardless of when you observe the paschal full moon in your time zone.