

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Decatur, Illinois

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We have a livestream option on our website!

<https://felcdecatur.org/live>



October 29, 2023, at 9:30 am

HOLY COMMUNION

Come Experience God's Unlimited Grace, in a Most Welcoming Place

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

GATHERING

***CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be God, the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.
Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,
**you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.**
**We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.**
**We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.**
**For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.**
**For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.**
**For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.**
**Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.**
Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In ✠ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.
Amen.

***GATHERING SONG**

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

ELW #504

Organ introduction (Choir will sing Stanza 3)

- 1 A mighty fortress is our God,
a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.**
- 2 No strength of ours can match his might!
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.**

Organ interlude

Stanza 3 - Choir only

- 3 Though hordes of devils fill the land
all threat'ning to devour us,
we tremble not, unmoved we stand;
they cannot overpow'r us.
Let this world's tyrant rage;
in battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail;
God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.**

Organ interlude

- 4 God's Word forever shall abide,
no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side
with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
goods, honor, child, or spouse,
though life be wrenched away,
they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!**

GREETING

ELW p. 138

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also, with you.**

*KYRIE

ELW p. 138

*HYMN OF PRAISE

“Glory to God”

ELW p. 139-140

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray,

Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING:

JEREMIAH 31:31-34

The renewed covenant will not be breakable, but like the old covenant it will expect the people to live upright lives. To know the LORD means that one will defend the cause of the poor and needy (Jer. 22:16). The renewed covenant is possible only because the LORD will forgive iniquity and not remember sin. Our hope lies in a God who forgets.

³¹The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

PSALM 46

¹God is our ref-¹uge and strength,
a very present¹ help in trouble.

²**Therefore we will not fear, though the¹ earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths¹ of the sea;**

³though its waters¹ rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble¹ with its tumult.

⁴**There is a river whose streams make glad the cit-¹y of God,
the holy habitation of¹ the Most High.**

⁵God is in the midst of the city; it shall ¹ not be shaken;

God shall help it at the ¹ break of day.

⁶**The nations rage, and the ¹ kingdoms shake;**

God speaks, and the earth ¹ melts away.

⁷The LORD of ¹ hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob ¹ is our stronghold.

⁸**Come now, regard the works ¹ of the LORD,**

what desolations God has brought up- ¹ on the earth;

⁹behold the one who makes war to cease in ¹ all the world;

who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the ¹ shields with fire.

¹⁰**“Be still, then, and know that ¹ I am God;**

I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted ¹ in the earth.”

¹¹The LORD of ¹ hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob ¹ is our stronghold.

SECOND READING:

ROMANS 3:19-28

Paul’s words stand at the heart of the preaching of Martin Luther and other Reformation leaders. No human beings make themselves right with God through works of the law. We are brought into a right relationship with God through the divine activity centered in Christ’s death. This act is a gift of grace that liberates us from sin and empowers our faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰For “no human being will be justified in his sight” by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

²¹But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (sung)**

ELW p. 142

The holy gospel according to John, the 8th chapter

Glory to you, O Lord.

***GOSPEL READING:**

JOHN 8:31-36

Jesus speaks of truth and freedom as spiritual realities known through his word. He reveals the truth that sets people free from sin.

³¹Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” ³³They answered him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, ‘You will be made free’?”

³⁴Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

You see a big problem. What do you do?

(Shade in the dot that represents your response.)

Scrap it and start over. **O** **O** **O** **O** **O** **Fix it to make it better.**

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Salvation unto Us Has Come”

ELW #590

APOSTLES CREED

ELW p. 105

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: Trusting in the transformative power of God’s loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

A: God our parent, you call us your children and have made us siblings through your son Jesus. Heal the church’s many divisions, bring understanding and peace where there has been contention and strife, and unite us in one body through the love of Christ.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A: God our creator, your hands have made the heights of the mountains, the depths of the sea, and the life that animates all creation. Bring relief to areas harmed by wildfires, floods, storms, and human carelessness. Renew the face of the earth.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A: God our ruler, the nations rage and the kingdoms shake, but your word stands fast forever. Let your justice and peace roll down like waters wherever there is strife, injustice, war, or religious conflict.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A: God our champion, you are our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble.
Draw near to all who suffer. Be their rest and comfort.
God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A: God our reformer, you make all things new. Free us from complacency, open us to
unexpected ways, and kindle zeal in us for the future. We pray for young people affirming their
baptism. With them, stir in us a desire for your wisdom.
God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A: God our savior, you made yourself known in the lives of all who have died in the hope of
your grace. We give thanks for the witness of reformers like Martin Luther and for all whose
example has brought us closer to you.
God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

P: Gracious God, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your
unending love and amazing grace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

*** PEACE**

MEAL

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray,
**God of power, God of plenty,
all things belong to you.
We bring your gifts to the table,
that all might be fed.
Form us into the body of your Beloved,
Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

ELW p. 144

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY

ELW p. 144

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p. 145 (right side)

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

At each worship service FELC celebrates communion around the altar rail using non-alcoholic sacramental wine so that all present may receive God's Grace in this sacrament. If anyone is unable to come to the altar, the Pastor and assistants will bring the sacrament to you. (If possible, please alert the Pastor or Assistant prior to Worship service if you want communion at your seat). You are also welcome to pick up a disposable chalice containing wine or juice at the back of the church. If you are taking communion at the rail and feel less steady on your feet, feel free to come to the front of the communion rail rather than walking around toward the back.

COMMUNION

"Lamb of God"

ELW p. 146

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

**Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.**

**Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

SENDING

***BLESSING**

The God of glory, ✠ Jesus Christ, name above all names,
and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG**

"The Church of Christ, in Every Age"

ELW #729

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. God is at work in you.
Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**

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Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Pastor Rita Augsburger
Assisting Minister	Bill Fitzgerrel
Coordinator of Music and Technology/Organist/Handbells	Rick Strine
Technical Director	Jeremy Hahn
Audio/Visual	Audio/Visual Team
Bell Ringer	Larry Osborne
Greeters	Cheryl Wallace, Marilyn Oftedal, Patricia Cox
Check-In	Ruth Nihiser & Marsha Thornhill
Communion Aide	Jane Cade
Money Counters	Gary Beck, Larry Haab, Sheryl Brilley
Acolyte	Aurora Romine
Flowers	Rick Strine – In Memory of his Mother, Joan & In Honor of Reformation

Welcome to all of you here and to those participating on-line

Announcements

1. Today is Reformation Sunday celebrating Martin Luther's 95 Theses.
2. The AMELCA Team served 68 clients on Wednesday, October 25th.
3. This afternoon beginning at 2:00pm in the Sanctuary, is the solo and chamber music by members of the Millikin-Decatur Symphony.
4. Book Study group will meet Monday the 30th at 7:00pm. You have the option to meet in person in the office conference room or via zoom. We will discuss Part 4.
5. Baby Jesus donations will be collected from the first of November to December 10th. Donations will go to DMH since there's no longer a maternity ward at St. Mary's.
6. Toys for Tots donation boxes will be in the Narthex from November through early December.
7. Watch for AMELCA fund-raiser November 19th & December 10th at Son-Rise Café. Our Youth will be selling cookie jar mixes and there will be a bake sale. Please see Nancy Salefski to donate a bakery item.
8. Next Sunday, November 5th is All Saints Sunday.

Let us Prepare our Hearts and Minds for Worship

Prayer Requests

Matt Andrews and Family, Mary Ellen & Tom Burns, Debra Jones,
Jan Lawson, Carolyn Renton, Anna Young

*If you'd like to add someone to the Prayer Request list, please contact Kay at the office.
Prayer requests remain on the list for 3 weeks and can be extended longer at your request*

UPCOMING DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

MEET, EAT & GREET
(MEG)

Upcoming MEG Luncheons Thursday's at Noon

November 9	February 8
December 14	March 14
January 11	April 11



This afternoon beginning at 2:00pm in the FELC Sanctuary, is the solo and chamber music by members of the Millikin-Decatur Symphony. Invite your friends, family & neighbors to join you at this lovely event.



**ADVENT "BARN
PAINT" RETREAT**

Saturday, December 9th 9:00am-12:00pm FELC Fellowship Hall

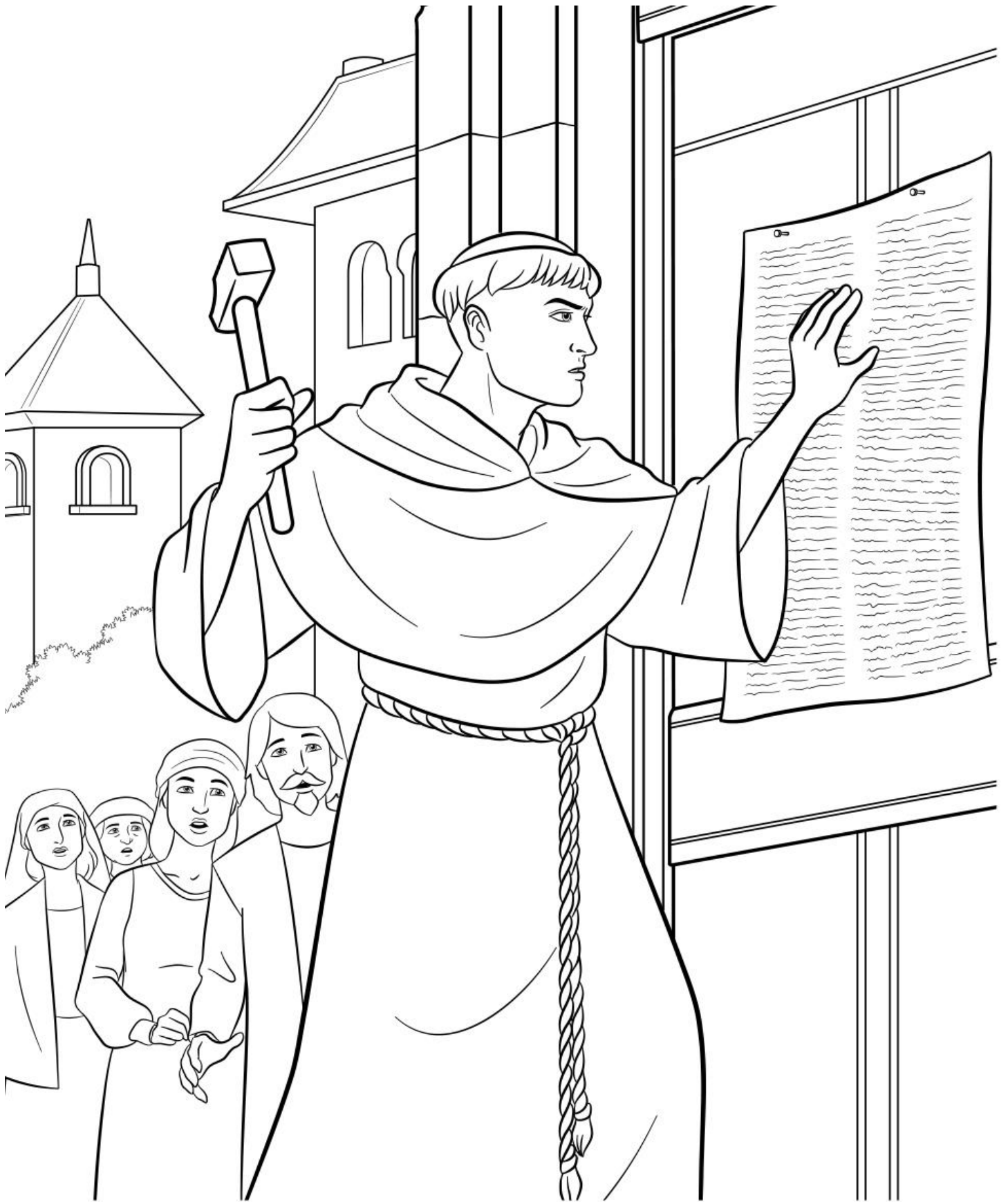
*Come spend a morning of creativity and preparing your heart for the wonderful
glory of the Incarnation – Emmanuel "God with Us"!*

Participants will paint on a 10"x10" or 12"x12" board with the design pre-drawn. There is no cost for this gathering. Supplies are covered by Thrivent Choice Dollars. Please bring a hair dryer that has a cool setting (for a faster drying time of paint).

Sign-up in the office or with Pastor Rita by the end of October.

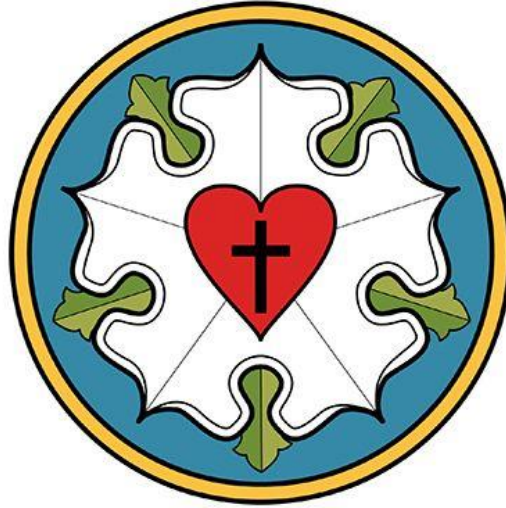


This Christmas season is the 76th Anniversary of the Marine Corps Reserve's "Toys for Tots" program. Here in Macon County this outreach is now coordinated with Dove and WAND TV's "Day of Giving", and volunteers are always welcome to help sort and distribute the toys mid-December. While "Toys for Tots" donation boxes will be available throughout Decatur, this year First Lutheran will have a box at our lower entrance and a box in our narthex during November and early December. See Bob Tyler for additional information. *Semper fidelis* – Bob Tyler



LUTHER SEAL

What does this mean?



Excerpts from Luther's interpretation...

THE BLACK CROSS IN A HEART

retains its natural color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. For one who "believes from the heart will be justified" (Rom. 10:10). Although it is indeed a black cross, which mortifies and which should also cause pain, it leaves the heart in its natural color. It does not corrupt nature, that is, it does not kill but keeps alive. "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17) but by faith in the crucified.

A WHITE ROSE

shows that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace. In other words, it places the believer into a white, joyous rose, for this faith does not give

Corissa
Nelson
n.c.

peace and joy like the world gives (John 14:27). That is why the rose should be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and the angels (Matt. 28:3; John 20:12).

THE SKY-BLUE FIELD

symbolizes that such joy in spirit and faith is a beginning of the heavenly future joy, which begins already, but is grasped in hope, not yet revealed.

A GOLDEN RING

around this field is a golden ring, symbolizing that such blessedness in Heaven lasts forever and has no end. Such blessedness is exquisite, beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable, most precious and best metal. This is my compendium theologiae [summary of theology].