

# **First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**250 W. Decatur St.**

**Decatur, Illinois**

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**Website: [www.felcdecatur.org](http://www.felcdecatur.org)**

**Email: [felc\\_decatur@outlook.com](mailto:felc_decatur@outlook.com)**

*We have a livestream option on our website!*

**<https://felcdecatur.org/live>**



**February 14, 2024**

**12:15pm & 6:00pm**

**ASH WEDNESDAY**

**HOLY COMMUNION**

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

## **GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

### **GREETING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray,

**Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, 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: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17**

*Because of the coming day of the LORD, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community declares that God is gracious and asks God to spare the people lest the nations doubt God's power to save.*

<sup>1</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
    sound the alarm on my holy mountain!  
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,  
    for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—  
<sup>2</sup>a day of darkness and gloom,  
    a day of clouds and thick darkness!  
Like blackness spread upon the mountains  
    a great and powerful army comes;  
their like has never been from of old,  
    nor will be again after them  
    in ages to come.

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD,  
    return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
    <sup>13</sup>rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Return to the LORD, your God,  
    for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
    and relents from punishing.

<sup>14</sup>Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,  
    and leave a blessing behind him,  
a grain offering and a drink offering

for the LORD, your God?  
<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
<sup>16</sup>gather the people.  
Sanctify the congregation;  
assemble the aged;  
gather the children,  
even infants at the breast.  
Let the bridegroom leave his room,  
and the bride her canopy.

<sup>17</sup>Between the vestibule and the altar  
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep.  
Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD,  
and do not make your heritage a mockery,  
a byword among the nations.  
Why should it be said among the peoples,  
'Where is their God?' "

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 51:1-17**

<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your <sup>1</sup>steadfast love;  
in your great compassion blot out <sup>1</sup>my offenses.  
<sup>2</sup>**Wash me through and through <sup>1</sup>from my wickedness,  
and cleanse me <sup>1</sup>from my sin.**  
<sup>3</sup>For I know <sup>1</sup>my offenses,  
and my sin is ev- <sup>1</sup>er before me.  
<sup>4</sup>**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil <sup>1</sup>in your sight;  
so you are justified when you speak and right <sup>1</sup>in your judgment.**  
<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born <sup>1</sup>steeped in wickedness,  
a sinner from my <sup>1</sup>mother's womb.  
<sup>6</sup>**Indeed, you delight in truth <sup>1</sup>deep within me,  
and would have me know wisdom <sup>1</sup>deep within.**  
<sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I <sup>1</sup>shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be pur- <sup>1</sup>er than snow.  
<sup>8</sup>**Let me hear <sup>1</sup>joy and gladness;  
that the body you have broken <sup>1</sup>may rejoice.**  
<sup>9</sup>Hide your face <sup>1</sup>from my sins,  
and blot out <sup>1</sup>all my wickedness.  
<sup>10</sup>**Create in me a clean <sup>1</sup>heart, O God,  
and renew a right spir- <sup>1</sup>it within me.**  
<sup>11</sup>Cast me not away <sup>1</sup>from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spir- <sup>1</sup>it from me.

- <sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of | your salvation  
and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit.**
- <sup>13</sup>Let me teach your ways | to offenders, and sinners shall be re- | stored to you.
- <sup>14</sup>**Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of | my salvation,  
and my tongue shall sing | of your righteousness.**
- <sup>15</sup>O Lord, o- | pen my lips,  
and my mouth shall pro- | claim your praise.
- <sup>16</sup>**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or | I would give it.  
You are not pleased | with burnt offering.**
- <sup>17</sup>The sacrifice of God is a | troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will | not despise.

## **SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10**

*The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.*

<sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## Lenten Acclamation



*The proper verse may be sung by a leader. Then the acclamation is repeated.*

Music: Richard Proulx, b. 1937  
Music © 1975 GIA Publications, Inc. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. [www.giamusic.com](http://www.giamusic.com). 800.442.3358.  
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The holy gospel according to Matthew the 6<sup>th</sup> Chapter.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>6</sup>But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>16</sup>“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

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

### **SERMON**

**INVITATION TO LENT (ELW p. 252)**

Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

**CONFESSION OF SIN (ELW p. 252)**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most holy and merciful God,

**we confess to you and to one another,  
and before the whole company of heaven,  
that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault,  
by our own most grievous fault,  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

P: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our past unfaithfulness, pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

**Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**



### **BLESSING & IMPOSITION OF ASHES (ELW p. 254)**

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.

May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*(Those that wish to receive ashes are invited to come forward)*

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

*(Prayers will continue after receiving ashes)*

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,  
**that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,  
**bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.  
**Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

A: You call us to return to you, steadfast God. Renew a right spirit within the church and cleanse the hearts of your people. Strengthen those who proclaim your gospel in word and deed. Hear us, O God. **Your Mercy is Great.**

A: You sustain your creation, generous God. Supply all that is needful for life to flourish. Protect endangered species and fragile habitats. Teach us to live lightly upon the earth and to honor it as our home. Hear us, O God. **Your Mercy is Great.**

A: You seek justice and peace, righteous God. Rebuild cities and homelands devastated by war. Provide welcome, help, and safety to refugees. Prosper negotiations that lead to lasting peace among the nations. Hear us, O God. **Your Mercy is Great.**

A: You care for all people, loving God. Heal any who are scarred by violence, addiction, or trauma of any kind. Comfort those who grieve and bring relief to any in pain. Hear us, O God. **Your Mercy is Great.**

A: You gather this assembly, abiding God. Unite us in serving our neighbors and working for justice. We pray for caregivers and people who are hospitalized, in treatment, or recovering from illness. Hear us, O God. **Your Mercy is Great.**

A: You redeem us from death, faithful God. We give thanks to those who served you in the church. Bring us with all the saints into everlasting joy. Hear us, O God. **Your Mercy is Great.**

P: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
**Amen.**

## **MEAL**

### **OFFERING**

*(We thank you for your time, talent, and money toward ministry at FELC and beyond. Please place your money donation in the offering basket at the back of church, or on-line, or by mail.)*

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray,



**God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life.  
Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ  
our Lord. Amen.**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

### **DIALOGUE**

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.**

### **PREFACE**

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.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,  
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
we may come to the fullness of your grace.  
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, HOLY

ELW SM #193

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,  
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the  
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: Per Harling, b. 1948  
Music © 2004 Augsburg Fortress

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.  
Your mercy is everlasting  
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.  
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.  
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.  
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness  
to the land of milk and honey.  
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.  
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.  
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup  
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Bless this feast.

Grace our table with your presence.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.  
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.  
Breathe new life into us.  
Send us forth,  
burning with justice, peace, and love.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places,  
with the earth and all its creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars,  
we praise you, O God,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**ELW p. 255 (right side)**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

*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 SM# 195

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Music: *Bread of Life*, Jeremy Young, b. 1948  
Music © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

## PRAYER (ELW p. 254)

Let us pray,

**Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## BLESSING (ELW p. 255)

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

### *“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me”*

ELW #325

## **DISMISSAL (ELW p. 255)**

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage;  
hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;  
help the afflicted; honor all people;  
love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **\*POSTLUDE**

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**12:15pm First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

*Participants*

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Presiding and Preaching                                | Pastor Rita Augsburger |
| Assisting Minister                                     | Bill Fitzgerrel        |
| Coordinator of Music and Technology/Organist/Handbells | Rick Strine            |
| Organist   | Steve Wenger           |
| Choir Director   | Sarah Boline           |
| Technical Director                                     | Jeremy Hahn            |
| Audio/Visual   | Audio/Visual Team      |
| Bell Ringer  | Bill Fitzgerrel        |
| Greeters   | Mike & Karen Reynolds  |
| Check-In   | Carol & Bob Tyler      |
| Communion Aide   |                        |

**6:00pm First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

*Participants*

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Presiding and Preaching                                | Pastor Rita Augsburger |
| Assisting Minister                                     | Lucas Reynolds         |
| Coordinator of Music and Technology/Organist/Handbells | Rick Strine            |
| Choir Director   | Sarah Boline           |
| Technical Director                                     | Jeremy Hahn            |
| Audio/Visual   | Audio/Visual Team      |
| Bell Ringer  | Mike Reynolds          |
| Greeters   | Mike & Karen Reynolds  |
| Check-In   | Carol & Bob Tyler      |
| Communion Aide   |                        |