

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

250 W. Decatur St.

Decatur, Illinois

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We have a livestream option on our website!

<https://felcdecatur.org/live>



February 25, 2024, 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 the holy Trinity, † one God,
who writes the law on our hearts,
who draws all people together through Jesus.
Amen.

Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,
**we confess that we are caught in snares of sin
and cannot break free.
We hoard resources while our neighbors
are hungry and cold.
We speak in ways that silence others.
We are silent when we should speak up.
We keep score in our hearts.
We let hurts grow into hatred.
For all these things and for sins only you know,
forgive us, Lord.
Amen.**

Here is a flood of grace:
Out of love for the whole world,
God draws near to us,
breaks every snare of sin,
washes away our wrongs,
and restores the promise of life through † Jesus Christ.
Amen.

*GATHERING SONG

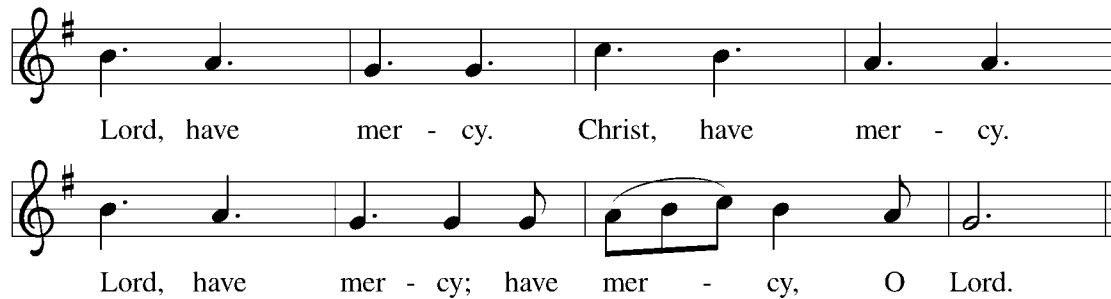
"How Firm a Foundation"

ELW #796

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.**



Music: *Mass No. 1*, Avon Gillespie
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*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray,

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake 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: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 22:23-31

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's¹ line, give glory.

Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off-¹spring of Israel.

²⁴**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the LORD's face hid-¹den from them; but when they cry out,¹ the LORD hears them.**

²⁵From you comes my praise in the¹ great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who¹ fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat¹ and be satisfied,**

Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts¹ live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn¹ to the LORD;

all the families of nations shall bow¹ before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs¹ to the LORD,**

who rules o-¹ver the nations.

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow¹ down in worship;

all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel be-¹fore the LORD.

³⁰**Their descendants shall¹ serve the LORD,**

whom they shall proclaim to genera-¹tions to come.

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people¹ yet unborn,

saying to them, "The¹ LORD has acted!"

Second Reading: Romans 4:13-25

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone,

²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

LENTEN ACCLAMATION

ELW SM #177

“May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by which the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.”



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. 800.442.3358.
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The holy gospel according to Mark the 8th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Mark 8:31-38

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said”

ELW #667

***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 brief silence.

A: We turn to you for meaning, holy God. Nurture in your children the gifts of the Spirit poured out in baptism and let the mind of Christ guide the church. Give wisdom and discernment to our bishops, pastors, deacons, teachers, and leaders.

Hear us, O God.

(Response: "Hear Our Prayer" ELW SM #178)



Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole:
 peace to all people, hope for each soul.
 God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

Text and music: Paul Andress, b. 1956
 Text and music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

A: We turn to you for renewal. Save lives and ecosystems threatened by pollution and a changing climate. Cleanse the earth's waters and restore the soil. Preserve rainforests, deserts, and wildlife, that generations to come may cherish your creation.

Hear us, O God. *(Response: ELW SM #178)*

A: We turn to you for justice. Uphold the worth and dignity of every person, especially any who experience hatred and rejection because of gender, ability, sexual orientation, color, ethnicity, or religion.

Hear us, O God. *(Response: ELW SM #178)*

A: We turn to you for healing. Send compassionate helpers to any who suffer because of war and violence. Shelter unhoused people, befriend those who are lonely, bring hope to any in despair, and console the bereaved.

Hear us, O God. *(Response: ELW SM #178)*

A: We turn to you for purpose. Remind us of your faithfulness to this congregation. Increase our trust in your guidance and keep us near the cross. Grant that our acts of service will express Christ's sacrificial love.

Hear us, O God. (*Response: ELW SM #178*)

A: We turn to you for peace. We remember Jim Summers and the saints who lived in service to others. Inspire us by their example until you gather us into your kingdom.

Hear us, O God. (*Response: ELW SM #178*)

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

Amen.

*** PEACE**

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,

**Jesus, you are the bread of life
and the host of this meal.**

**Bless these gifts that we have gathered
that all people may know your goodness.**

**Feed us not only with this holy food
but with hunger for justice and peace.**

We pray this in your name.

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.

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p. 145 (right side)

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Bread for the journey.
A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

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 AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray,
Generous God,
at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.
As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,
now make us one loaf to feed the world;
in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.
Amen.

SENDING

*BLESSING

Beloved,
we are God's own people,
holy, washed, renewed.
God bless you and keep you,
shower you with mercy,
fill you with courage,
and ☩ give you peace.
Amen.

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share your bread.
Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**

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Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Pastor Rita Augsburg
Assisting Minister	Dan Lynch
Coordinator of Music and Technology/Organist/Handbells	Rick Strine
Choir Director	Sarah Boline
Technical Director	Jeremy Hahn
Audio/Visual	Audio/Visual Team
Bell Ringer	Larry Osborne
Greeters	Marilyn Oftedal & Larry Osborne
Check-In	Bob & Carol Tyler
Communion Aide	Bill Fitzgerrel
Money Counters	Bob Tyler & Gary Beck
Acolyte	Sienna Romine
Flowers	Donated by Svendsen's Florist

Prayer Requests

Matt Andrews and family, family of Dean Banfield, Whitley Blankenship, friends & family of Tom Brennan, Mary Ellen & Tom Burns, family of Dale Howard, Debra Jones, Jan Lawson, Barbara Lemen, family of Cody Miller, Doris Oliver, Braden Paulson, Sandy Pawsey, family of Ryan Snyder, Hailey Stark, Rick Strine, family of Jim Summers, Patty & Ken Tague, Judy Thompson, Marie Van Cura (Pr. Rita's niece)

*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.*

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

Announcements

- The AMELCA Team served 60 clients on Wednesday, February 21st.
- The next Book Study will cover the book “*The Red Sea Rules*” by author Robert Morgan. Larry Osborne and Arlene Mannlein will lead this study. The date and time will be announced shortly. Please contact the office if you are interested. All are welcome to participate.
- Attention: For those of you that have Thrivent Choice Dollars to designate, the 2023 Thrivent Choice Dollars must be directed by March 31st.
- Easter Flower Memorial &/or Honorarium forms will be available next week. Forms will be in the hallway by the entrance.

This Week:

- Grief Group meets Monday, February 26th from 11-12:30pm in the Lounge.
- Lent Study meets Wednesday, February 28th from 12:15pm-1:15pm in the Lounge.
- Exec Board meets Thursday, February 29th at 3:30pm

Let us Prepare our Hearts and Minds for Worship

UPCOMING DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

MEET, EAT & GREET (MEG)

Upcoming MEG Luncheons Second Thursdays at Noon

*Mar. 14	*Aug 8
*Apr. 11	*Sept 12
*May 9	*Oct 10
*June 6	*Nov. 14
*July 11	*Dec. 12



THE GRIEF GROUP meets on Mondays from 11:00am-12:30pm in the lounge on the following dates:

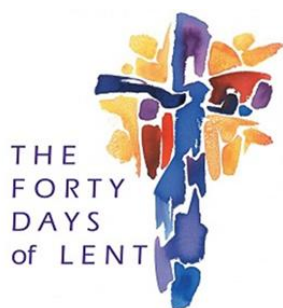
- Feb 26
- Mar 11, 25
- April 8, 22



ART WORKSHOP CLASSES will be in the fellowship hall from 1:00pm-2:30pm the 3rd Thursday each month:

- *March 21
- *April 18
- *May 16

Please contact the office or Pastor Rita to sign up.



- **Mid-Week Lenten Study Wednesdays 12:15pm - 1:15pm**
 - February 28
 - March 6, 13 & 20
- **Palm Sunday - March 24 - 9:30am**
- **Maundy Thursday - March 28 - 6:00pm**
- **Good Friday - March 29 - 6:00pm**
- **Easter - March 31 - 9:30am**