

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>



March 3, 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.

A reading from the book of Exodus chapter 20:1-17

Then God spoke all these words:

² I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

(Pause for reflection...)

⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

(Pause for reflection...)

⁷ You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

(Pause for reflection...)

⁸ Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. ⁹For six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son, or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore, the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

(Pause for reflection...)

¹² Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

(Pause for reflection...)

¹³ You shall not murder. *(Pause for reflection...)*

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery. *(Pause for reflection...)*

¹⁵ You shall not steal. *(Pause for reflection...)*

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. *(Pause for reflection...)*

¹⁷ You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. *(Pause 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**

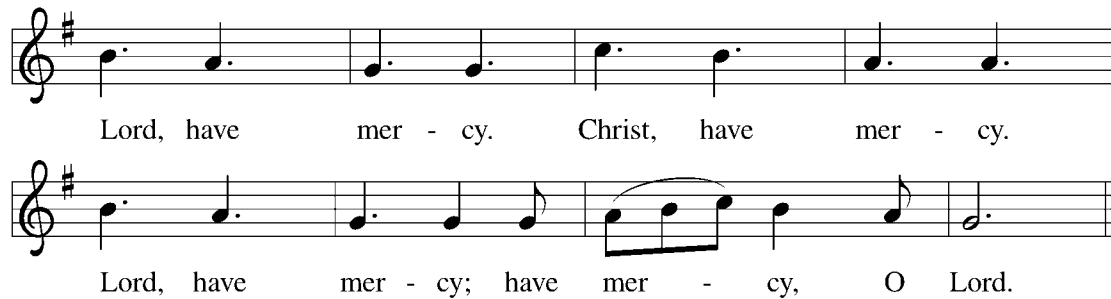
"In the Cross of Christ I Glory"

ELW #324

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,

**Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
 Amen.**

WORD

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
 and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 19

- ¹The heavens declare the glo-¹ ry of God,
and the sky proclaims its¹ maker's handiwork.
- ²**One day tells its tale¹ to another,**
and one night imparts knowledge¹ to another.
- ³Although they have no¹ words or language,
and their voices¹ are not heard,
- ⁴**their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends¹ of the world,**
where God has pitched a tent¹ for the sun.
- ⁵It comes forth like a bridegroom out¹ of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to¹ run its course.
- ⁶**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of¹**
it again; nothing is hidden from its¹ burning heat.
- ⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re-¹ lives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to¹ the simple.
- ⁸**The statutes of the LORD are just and re-¹ joice the heart;**
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light¹ to the eyes.
- ⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and en-¹ dures forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous¹ altogether.
- ¹⁰**More to be desired are they than gold, more than¹ much fine gold,**
sweeter far than honey, than honey¹ in the comb.
- ¹¹By them also is your ser-¹ vant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is¹ great reward.
- ¹²**Who can detect one's¹ own offenses?**
Cleanse me from my¹ secret faults.
- ¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion¹ over me;
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a¹ great offense.
- ¹⁴**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable¹**
in your sight, O LORD, my strength and¹ my redeemer.

LENTEN ACCLAMATION

ELW SM #177

“We proclaim Christ crucified,
the power of God and the wisdom of God.”



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

The holy gospel according to John the 2nd Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 2:13-22

Jesus attacks the commercialization of religion by driving merchants out of the temple. When challenged, he responds mysteriously, with the first prediction of his own death and resurrection. In the midst of a seemingly stable religious center, Jesus suggests that the center itself has changed.

¹³The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, “Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!” ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” ¹⁸The Jews then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” ¹⁹Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” ²¹But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

A **covenant** is a promise between two or more parties to perform certain actions. “Covenant” was a well-known concept in ancient times, and covenants could be made between two equal parties or between a king and a subject. The king would promise certain protections, and the subject would promise loyalty to the king. A covenant might be conditional or unconditional.

In the bible, the Old Testament is more than a history of Israel, it is also a history of the covenant in which God reveals over time, God’s character, God’s plans, and purposes for humankind. Two covenants God made (one with Noah and one with Abraham) are listed below.

The **Noahic** Covenant – Genesis 9:13 - is unconditional and everlasting.

The **Abrahamic** Covenant – Genesis 17:7 – is unconditional and everlasting.

Jesus predicts his upcoming passion and suffering three times in the gospel of Mark. (Mark 8:31-38, Mark 9:31-50, Mark 10:33-45)

Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection in today’s gospel (John 2:19, 21).

APOSTLES CREED

ELW p. 105

***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: You alone are God. We thank you for the gift of sabbath rest. Awaken the church to the mystery of your presence and give us glad hearts as we receive the good news of your deliverance.

Hear us, O God.

(Response: “Hear Our Prayer” ELW SM #178)



Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole:



peace to all peo - ple, 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: You renew creation. Drive out those who would make the earth a marketplace. Protect rainforests, mountaintops, oceans, and wilderness areas from commercial exploitation. Unite nations, policymakers, and businesses in efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

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

A: You judge the nations. We pray for an end to war and strife in every land. Strengthen international efforts to negotiate peace and provide humanitarian aid to people fleeing from conflict.

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

A: You bring healing and hope. We give thanks for physicians, nurses, researchers, therapists, and public health workers who prevent and treat illness. We pray for any who are sick.

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

A: You abide with your people. Sustain any in this community undergoing life transitions: marriage, divorce, childbirth, adoption, moving, graduation, employment change, or a death in the family. We pray for those preparing for baptism.
Hear us, O God. (*Response: ELW SM #178*)

A: You bring life from death. We remember our loved ones who have died, confident that they have new life in you. May we trust that nothing can separate us from your love.
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.

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.

*EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

P: In the name of God:
We send you forth with Word and Sacrament to our homebound,
that they may share with us in the communion of Christ's Body and Blood.
We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread,
one cup in Christ Jesus, Our Lord. 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.**

***SENDING SONG**

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

ELW #705

***DISMISSAL**

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

***POSTLUDE**

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Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Pastor Rita Augsburger
Assisting Minister	Jane Cade
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	Marilyn Oftedal & Nancy Salefski
Check-In	Bob & Judy Carney
Communion Aide	Gary Beck
Money Counters	The Wengers & The Broekings
Acolyte	Leighton Oliver
Flowers	Bob & Judy Carney in Honor of their 58 th Wedding Anniversary

Prayer Requests

Matt Andrews & family, Mary Ellen & Tom Burns, Jan Lawson, Sandy Pawsey, Rick Strine, friends & family of Jim Summers, Patty & Ken Tague, 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 49 clients on Wednesday, February 28th.
- The next Book Study will cover the book “*The Red Sea Rules*” by author Robert Morgan. Council members have copies of the book in their inbox and will begin studying the book as a part of Council meeting. Larry Osborne and Arlene Mannlein will lead the study for the congregation. The congregation study date and time will be announced in a week or two. 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 are available in the hallway by the entrance. Please return them to the office by March 18th.
- Please be advised, the City of Decatur Parking Enforcement Officers are policing parking lots for handicap parking violations. Only those with a handicap license plate or a handicap placard are allowed to park in the FELC handicap parking places. All others are subject to a \$250 ticket. Also, there is no parking in the ‘dashed line area’ of handicap parking. Today, one of the quilters was ticketed for parking in the handicap area. I sent an email inquiry to the Police Department asking why Parking Enforcement was driving through the FELC parking lot, which is a private parking lot. Lieutenant Quehl of the Decatur Police Department advised me, the majority of handicap parking tickets are written for handicap parking violations in private parking lots.

This Week:

- Lent Study meets Wednesday, March 6th from 12:15pm-1:15pm in the Lounge.
- Finance Committee meets Thursday, March 7th at 4pm.
- Foundation meets Thursday, March 7th at 5:30pm.

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:

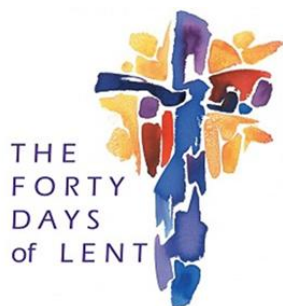
- Mar 11, 25
- April 8, 22



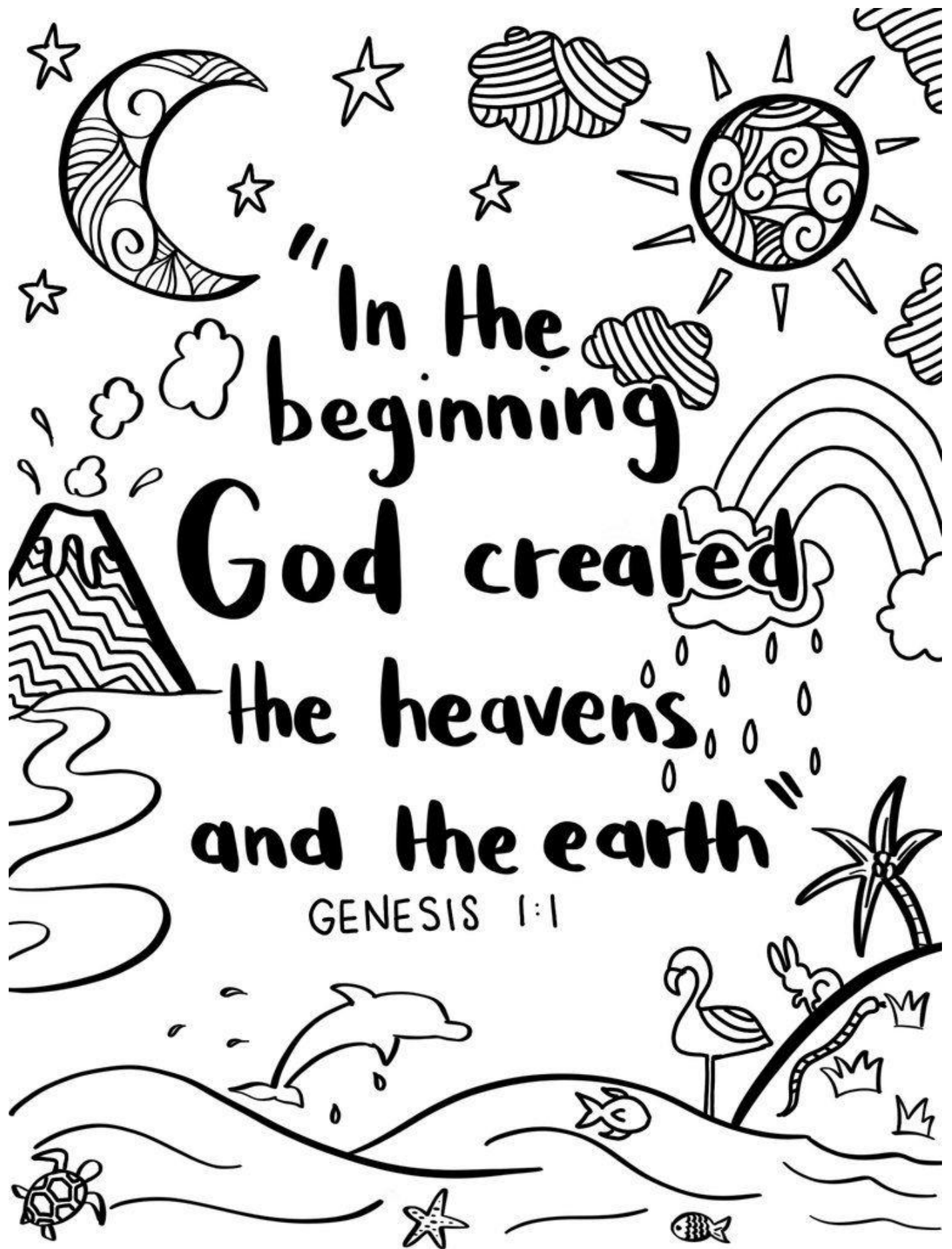
ART WORKSHOP CLASSES will be in the fellowship hall from 1:00pm-2:30pm the 3rd Thursday each month:

- *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**
 - 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**



PSALM 19:1

THE

Heavens

DECLARE

THE GLORY
OF GOD

THE SKIES
PROCLAIM

the
WORK of
His

HANDS



The Ten Commandments

And God spoke all these words: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me." Exodus 20:1-3

Based on Exodus 20:1-17 (NIV)



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

SABBATH
 WIFE
 COVET
 LORD
 MISUSE

NAME
 FALSE
 WORSHIP
 NEIGHBOR
 HONOR

MURDER
 REMEMBER
 MOTHER
 DONKEY
 ADULTERY

LIVE
 DAY
 LONG
 SEVENTH
 TESTIMONY

HOUSE
 IDOL
 FATHER
 STEAL
 HOLY