

# **First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**250 W. Decatur St.**

**Decatur, Illinois**

**(217) 423-7783**

**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>**



**March 17, 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.**

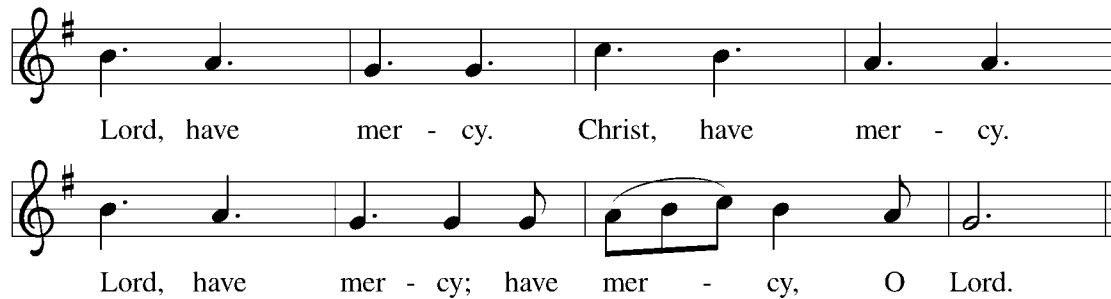
**\*GATHERING SONG**      *"Lord, Who's Love in Humble Service"*

**ELW #712**

#### **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  
 Music © 1987 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638 www.giamusic.com  
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**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray,

**O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in 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: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

*The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.*

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It 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. <sup>33</sup>But 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. <sup>34</sup>No 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.**

**SONG**

*“That’s Right Says the Lord”*

**BAND**

## **Psalm: Psalm 51:1-12**

<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 <sup>1</sup> your salvation  
and sustain me with your boun- <sup>1</sup> tiful Spirit.**

## **Second Reading: Hebrews 5:5-10**

*Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.*

<sup>5</sup>Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

“You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you”;

<sup>6</sup>as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,  
according to the order of Melchizedek.”

<sup>7</sup>In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup>Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; <sup>9</sup>and

having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, <sup>10</sup>having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## LENTEN ACCLAMATION

ELW SM #177

“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies,  
it remains a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”



*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.

The holy gospel according to John the 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

### Gospel: John 12:20-33

*Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Passover festival. Here Jesus' words about seeds planted in the ground turn the disaster of his death into the promise of a harvest in which everyone will be gathered.*

<sup>20</sup>Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup>They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” <sup>22</sup>Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup>Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

<sup>27</sup>“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup>Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” <sup>29</sup>The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” <sup>30</sup>Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. <sup>31</sup>Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup>And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup>He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

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. Three covenants God made (one with Noah, one with Abraham, and one with Moses and the Israelites) are listed below:

- 1) The **Noahic** Covenant – Genesis 9:13 - is unconditional and everlasting.
- 2) The **Abrahamic** Covenant – Genesis 17:7 – is unconditional and everlasting.
- 3) The **Mosaic** (Sinai) Covenant – Exodus 19-24) – is a conditional covenant.

The **New Covenant** is the promise that God will forgive sin and restore community (relationship) with those whose hearts are turned toward God. Jesus Christ is the mediator of this new Covenant, and his death on the cross is the basis of the promise (Luke 22:20 – *“this cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.”*).

The first reading today from Jeremiah speaks some of this new covenant.

(Jeremiah 31:31-34 *“...this is the new 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...all will 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.”*)

\*\*\*\*\*

***How is God creating a clean heart and renewing a right spirit in you today?*** (Psalm 51:10)

\*\*\*\*\*

### Three “lifting up” sayings of Jesus:

**John 3:14** - *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.”*

**John 8:28** - *“So Jesus said, when you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.”*

**John 12:32** - *“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself.”*

\*\*\*\*\*

Mat and Savannah Shaw “Be Here Now” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayVJnWjqQdM>

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY**

*“Now the Green Blade Rises”*

**ELW #379**

**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: God of the covenant, through the church you draw us into community. We give thanks for the means of grace around which we gather. Inspire writers, musicians, and artists whose creative gifts adorn our worship.

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



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

A: God of all that exists, you lavish the earth with extravagant beauty. Preserve the rich and complex diversity of living things. Support local, national, and international efforts to protect the environment for future generations.

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

A: God of the nations, you desire peace and plenty for all people. Defend those who challenge oppression and expose corruption. Support advocates for human rights, social justice, and the welfare of children.

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

A: God of good will, you restore what is broken. We pray for any experiencing estrangement, conflict, or abuse in families and intimate relationships. Protect and comfort all who are vulnerable, especially those living in institutions.

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

A: God of every time and place, you are with us. Support ministries of prayer and presence in this congregation. Move us to reach out to any who are homebound, lonely, grieving, in treatment, or ill. We especially pray for the congregation of First Lutheran Church in Beardstown and their Pastor, Pastor Catherine Burnette, as they minister to the community and families involved in the school bus/semi-truck accident this past Monday near Rushville, IL. Hear us, O God. (*Response: ELW SM #178*)

A: God of promise, we give thanks for the saints whose faith inspires us. Grant us faith to trust in your everlasting 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.*

## 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.**

**\*SENDING SONG**

*“Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing”*

**ELW #545**

**\*DISMISSAL**

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

**\*POSTLUDE**

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## 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.*

## Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Pastor Rita Augsburger
Assisting Minister	Isaac Ford
Coordinator of Music and Technology/Organist/Handbells	Rick Strine
Choir Director	Sarah Boline
Band	Milt Scott, Carla Scott, Matt Philips, Janice Isaacs, Marty Brilley & Rick Strine
Technical Director	Jeremy Hahn
Audio/Visual	Audio/Visual Team
Bell Ringer	Jane Cade
Greeters	Jane Cade & Denise Troester
Check-In	Bob & Judy Carney
Communion Aide	Bill Fitzgerrel
Money Counters	The Wengers & The Broekings
Acolyte	Aurora Romine
Flowers	Donated by Svendsen's Florist

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

## *Announcements*

- The AMELCA Team served 56 clients on Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Maundy Thursday Service on March 28<sup>th</sup> will be held at 6pm in the Fellowship Hall with appetizers and liturgical communion service. Good Friday Service on March 29<sup>th</sup> will be held at 6pm and will be back up in the sanctuary.
- Attention: For those of you that have Thrivent Choice Dollars to designate, the 2023 Thrivent Choice Dollars must be directed by March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Easter Flower Memoriam &/or Honorarium forms are available in the hallway by the entrance. Please return them to the office by March 18<sup>th</sup>.
- 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.

### **This Week:**

- Lent Study meets Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 12:15pm-1:15pm in the Lounge.
- Art Workshop meets Thursday, March 21 beginning at 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.

**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

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| *Apr. 11 | *Sept 12 |
| *May 9   | *Oct 10  |
| *June 13 | *Nov. 14 |
| *July 11 | *Dec. 12 |
| *Aug. 8  |          |



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

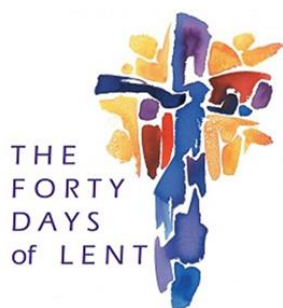
- Mar 25
- April 8, 22



**ART WORKSHOP CLASSES** will be in the fellowship hall from 1:00pm-2:30pm the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 20
- **Palm Sunday - March 24 - 9:30am**
- **Maundy Thursday - March 28 - 6:00pm**
- **Good Friday - March 29 - 6:00pm**
- **Easter - March 31 - 9:30am**



# Lent

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

Church

Friendship

Holy

Lent

Spirit

Believe

God

Hope

Luke

Worship

Fasting

Growth

Jerusalem

Mercy

Forgiveness

Healing

Jesus

Prayer