



First Evangelical Lutheran Church

627 Taylor Street, P.O. Box 540, Pecatonica, Illinois 61063 815-239-2390

Pastor Nord Swanstrom 815-520-5026 nordswanstrom@aol.com

PUTTING CHRIST FIRST!

e-mail: Churchoffice@firstluthpec.com **website:** www.firstluthpec.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FirstLutheranofPecatonica>

YouTube: First Lutheran of Pecatonica

Sunday, August 25th, 2024
14th Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome to Worship at First Lutheran Church



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) —

Northern Illinois Synod

If you are visiting with us today, we want you to feel welcome and to know that we are delighted to have you here. We are blessed with your presence. We would appreciate it if you would complete a visitor information card, located in the pew rack, and place it in the regular offering plate or the special offering plate by the doors.

*We practice open Communion — you don't have to be a member to participate. **All are welcome to receive Holy Communion.** In Holy Communion, we come trusting that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, that he is truly present in this meal and that we who receive his Body and Blood also receive his forgiveness and grace. All baptized persons who share this trust and hope are welcome to join us at the Lord's Table. Children who do not yet receive Communion are invited to come forward and receive a special blessing.*

In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

Welcome & Announcements

WE GATHER AS CHRIST'S PEOPLE

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the God of manna,
the God of miracles, the God of mercy.

C: Amen.

P: Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God, our provider,

C: help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.

P: Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, ☩ the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"Lead On O King Eternal"

Hymn #805

All Verses

Greeting

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

C: And also with you.



Prayer of the Day

**C: Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

First Reading

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

In the Near East, covenant means “agreement” or “alliance.” It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.

¹Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴“Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”
P: Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Ephesians 6:10-20

Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.

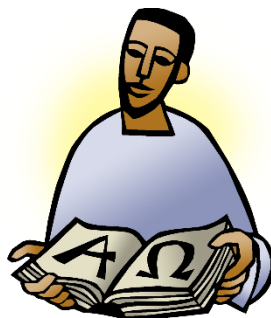
¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

P: Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel Reading

John 6:56-69

P: The Holy Gospel, according to John— the sixth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

The “hard saying” that offends Jesus’ disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: “To whom shall we go?”

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord!

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Nord Swanstrom

Hymn of the Day

“Blessed Assurance”

Hymn #638

All Verses

The Apostles' Creed

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Prayers of Intercession 8/25/2024

R: Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

R: Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead the church to put its trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

R: Creator God, we and all creation are sustained by your Word. We pray for all who remind us of our interconnectedness with all living things. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local climate justice advocates. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

R: God of wisdom, as our nation navigates another election cycle, guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Sustain all who serve on juries in their deliberations. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

R: God of restoration, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our hearts *especially*:

† Roger & Sue Schomber (members)

† Earl Hansen (friend of Kent and Lori Peterson)

† Joe Enzenbacher (member)

† Mary Vanvleck (friend of Jim & Janis DeWall)

† Cheyenne Green (friend of Carrie Daly)
† Allison Nelson Goble (community member)
† Ryker and Family/Hoppe and Family (community members)
† Dory Wellington (friend of Dorene Lagerstam)
† Kathy Dougherty (member)
† Jennifer Dougherty (member)
† Nathan Leopold (friend of Kathy Dougherty)
† Roger Wacker (member)
† Lacey Jensen (daughter-in-law of Mark and Rose Jensen)
† Larry Lilja (member)

Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

R: God of new life, protect students and teachers for a new school year. Bring an end to school shootings and cycles of violence. Move us to do all that is necessary to ensure a safe future for our children. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

R: God of every generation, we remember with thanksgiving all who have completed their baptismal journeys (*especially*). Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

R: We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping.

C: Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Offertory

Offering Prayer

C: Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: 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, sharing our life, lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to your own brilliant light. 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

Thanksgiving at the Table

P: Holy God, Breath of life and Fire of love: with a mighty wind you brought creation into being, and by a pillar of fire you led your people into freedom. We praise you for the gift of your Son, who poured out your Spirit on his disciples of every race and nation.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and the sending of the holy and life-giving Spirit, we await his coming again to renew the face of the earth. Send now your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this meal: anoint us with your gifts of faith, hope, and love, that, with thankful hearts, we may be witnesses to your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

P: Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

“Lamb of God”

Pg. 191

Communion Hymn

“Here I am Lord”

Hymn #574

The Holy Communion

Please come forward at the direction of the ushers. The bread is received in the open palm. Upon receiving the wafer, proceed to the person serving the wine. A blessing is offered to non-communing children. If you do not wish to receive Communion, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing, indicated by crossing your arms over your chest.

Prayer after Communion

P: Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn

“Guide Me Ever Great Redeemer”

Hymn #618

Verses 1 & 2

Blessing

P: The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ☩ be upon you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God.

In Our Prayers

- † Roger & Sue Schomber (members)
- † Earl Hansen (friend of Kent and Lori Peterson)
- † Joe Enzenbacher (member)
- † Mary Vanvleck (friend of Jim & Janis DeWall)
- † Cheyenne Green (friend of Carrie Daly)
- † Allison Nelson Goble (community member)
- † Ryker and Family/Hoppe and Family (community members)
- † Dory Wellington (friend of Dorene Lagerstam)
- † Kathy Dougherty (member)
- † Jennifer Dougherty (member)
- † Nathan Leopold (friend of Kathy Dougherty)
- † Roger Wacker (member)
- † Lacey Jensen (daughter-in-law of Mark and Rose Jensen)
- † Larry Lilja (member)

Serving away from home:

Jake Jenkins

Celebrating Birthdays:

Kim Greene (26), Dorene Lagerstam (26), Mark Jensen (30)

Important Dates: Have a meeting coming up? Please contact the church office with details so we can get it on the church calendar. Thank you!

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| Sunday, August 25th, 2024 | Holly's Farewell; 9:50 a.m. |
| Sunday, September 1st, 2024 | Church Council Meeting; 10:00 a.m. |
| Thursday, September 19th, 2024 | Men's Group; 12:00 p.m. |
| Thursday, September 26th, 2024 | Hope Charity; 12:30 p.m. |

Announcements:

Holly's Farewell-Please join us downstairs in the Fellowship Hall as we say Thank You to Holly Daly for her service as Secretary at First Lutheran Church.

Pecatonica Food Pantry/August Juicing— For the month of August we are collecting all varieties of juices--orange juice, apple juice, etc. for the Pec Food Pantry. Please leave all donations in the basket by the church doors.

Bake Sale- First Lutheran will host a Bake Sale Booth at the Pecatonica Farmers Market Saturday, August 31st at 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., as part of Pecatonica's Labor Day Festival. We need all kinds of baked goods-- cookies, cakes, pies, bars, breads, snack items--everything that makes our First Lutheran bake sales so popular. Please bring your donated items to the church by Friday, August 30th, so we can price & label items (basement door will be unlocked until 9:30) or bring your items directly to the First Lutheran table at the Farmers Market parking lot on Saturday morning by 8:00.

We also need workers to help staff the booth on Saturday morning. Please see Susan Zumdahl if you can help. Thank you for supporting First Lutheran in this outreach endeavor.

LWR Fall Ingathering-Thank you to everyone who has so generously donated to the baby layettes for Lutheran World Relief. We have collected enough items to assemble 101 baby kits thus far! We could still use larger baby blankets; we have the small "receiving blankets" but need the heavier, larger (30"-50" square) size. We will continue collecting items through the end of September. We appreciate your generosity.

School Kits-Please come downstairs and see the "colorful mountain" that's growing as the tables are piled high with bright colored backpacks full of school supplies for Lutheran World Relief. It is amazing! Also, this year we are collecting supplies for our local schools. The following items are very needed: Crayola crayons, Crayola markers, Crayola colored pencils, glue sticks, and black fine point Expo dry erase markers. Please pick up a list of the items for your next shopping trip, and help us give our Pecatonica & Winnebago students these needed supplies as school started this week!

We will be packing all the Lutheran World Relief kits on Thursday, September 26th at 9:00 am. There will be a Blessing Service at the Sunday morning worship September 29th. The boxes of kits will be delivered to the LWR truck at Zion Lutheran Church in Rockford on Saturday, October 5th. Your support and generosity makes this major project a success. Thank you!

Weekly offering needed: \$2,400

Attendance 8/18

Offering received on 8/18

28

General \$ 825.00

Virtual Views - 10

Synod \$ 148.00

Improvement \$ 00.00

Simply Giving \$ 1,994/mo. **2023 Mission Commitment \$2,200**

YTD amount forwarded ~ \$6,600

Worship Volunteers

August 25th

Dorene Lagerstam

Reader

Holly Daly

AV Tech

Carrie Daly

Accompanist

Tim Wurster and

Ushers

David Zumdahl

September 1st

Martha Ebbesmeyer

Sandra Smith

Kent Peterson and

Sue Schomber

