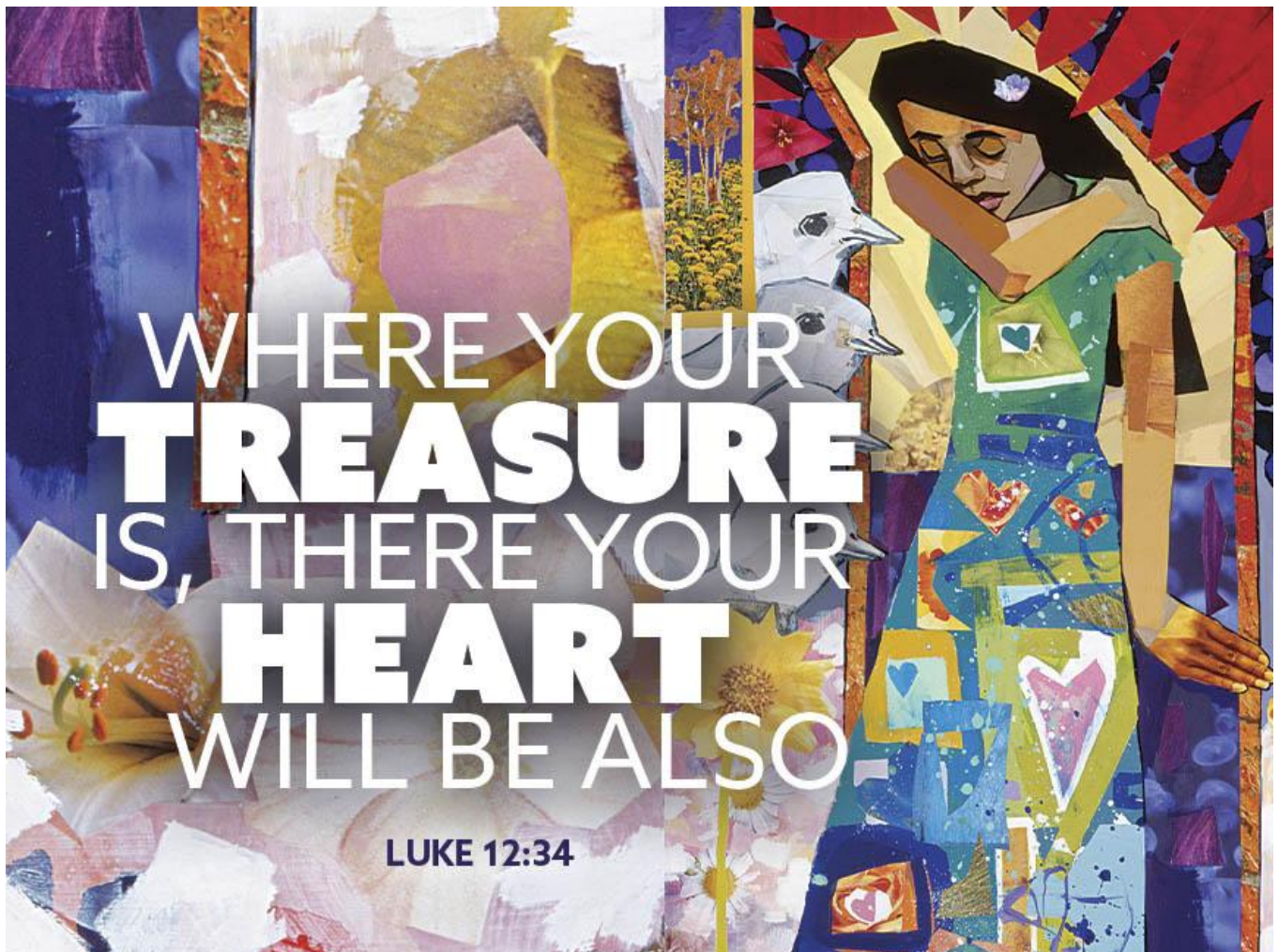


**First Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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(217) 423-7783**

**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>*



**August 10, 2025, at 9:30 am  
9<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
HOLY COMMUNION**

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

## INTRODUCTION

*Jesus says, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” It is God’s promise from the beginning—to Abraham, to the early church, and to the “little flock” of which we are a part in today’s assembly. Faith, God’s baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## PRELUDE

## GATHERING

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the name of the Father,  
and of the ✠ Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Merciful God,

**C: you free us to love others,  
but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.  
You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace,  
but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.  
You surround us with patience, kindness,  
and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right.  
In your mercy, forgive us.  
Do not give up on us.  
Heal us, break our bonds,  
and show us the path of life. Amen.**

P: You belong to Christ Jesus  
and you are God’s children through faith.  
In the cross of ✠ Christ,  
and through the power of the Holy Spirit,  
your sins are forgiven.  
Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

**C: Amen.**

**\*GATHERING SONG**

*“Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun”*

**ELW #557**

**GREETING**

**ELW p. 138**

**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.

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE**

*“This Is the Feast”*

**ELW p. 122-123**

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray,

**C:** Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**WORD**

**First Reading: Genesis 15:1-6**

*God promises childless and aging Abram that a child of his own will be his heir and that his descendants will number as many as the stars. Abram trusts God’s promise, and through this faith he is considered righteous.*

<sup>1</sup> After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” <sup>2</sup> But Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” <sup>3</sup> And Abram said, “You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.” <sup>4</sup> But the word of the LORD came to him, “This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.” <sup>5</sup> He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” <sup>6</sup> And he believed the LORD, and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

**A:** The Word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

**Psalms 33:12-22**

<sup>12</sup> Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD!  
Happy the people chosen to be God’s heritage!

- <sup>13</sup> **The LORD looks down from heaven,  
and sees all humankind.**
- <sup>14</sup> God sits firmly enthroned and watches  
all who dwell on the earth.
- <sup>15</sup> **God fashions all their hearts  
and observes all their deeds.**
- <sup>16</sup> A king is not saved by the size of the army,  
nor are warriors rescued by their great strength.
- <sup>17</sup> **The horse gives vain hope for victory;  
despite its great strength it cannot save.**
- <sup>18</sup> Truly, your eye is upon those who fear you, O LORD,  
upon those who wait for your steadfast love,
- <sup>19</sup> **to deliver their lives from death,  
and to keep them alive in time of famine.**
- <sup>20</sup> Our innermost being waits for you, O LORD,  
our helper and our shield.
- <sup>21</sup> **Surely, our heart rejoices in you,  
for in your holy name we put our trust.**
- <sup>22</sup> Let your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us,  
even as we place our hope in you.

## **Second Reading: Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16**

*Abraham and Sarah exemplify the vision of faith that people of God enact in every age. Their hope and trust in God's promise allowed them to face an unknown future and to receive the promise of God.*

<sup>1</sup> Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance, and he set out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. <sup>11</sup> By faith, with Sarah's involvement, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old, because he considered him faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup> Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

<sup>13</sup> All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, <sup>14</sup> for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better homeland, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*“Alleluia”*

**ELW p. 142**

P: The holy gospel according to Luke the 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**Gospel: Luke 12:32-40**

*Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God’s reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God’s generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.*

Jesus said: <sup>32</sup> “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>35</sup> “Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; <sup>36</sup> be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. <sup>37</sup> Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. <sup>38</sup> If he comes during the middle of the night or near dawn and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

<sup>39</sup> “But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>40</sup> You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again 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**

**P:** In solidarity with all creation, we join our voice to the voice of the whole church and pray for the needs of the world.

*A brief silence.*

**A:** Keep the heart of your church set firmly in you so that, with lamps lit and attentive to Christ's call at any time or place, your people are ready to respond with faithful action for the sake of the world. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** Worlds were prepared by your word. Speak healing and protection upon the earth, especially where life and habitats are threatened. Guide the work of astronomers and all who teach us about the stars and galaxies. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: You know the actions and deeds of the nations. Turn humanity away from instruments of war and violence. Fashion the hearts of world leaders to work for peace.  
God of grace,  
**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Let your lovingkindness be on those in need. Assure all who are afraid or experiencing great uncertainty that your promises are sure. God of grace,  
**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Calm the fears of migrants and refugees who set out, not knowing where they go. Provide shelter, sustenance, protection from harm, and welcome. Bless the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and other means of support and advocacy.  
God of grace,  
**C: hear our prayer.**

A: We celebrate the ancestors in the faith who built their lives on your promises and died having seen them only from a distance. Sustain us in our hope of things not seen. God of grace,  
**C: hear our prayer.**

P: Trusting in your lovingkindness, we place our prayer and hope in you, in the name of Jesus Christ.  
**C: Amen.**

**\*PEACE**

### **MEAL**

**OFFERING SONG**                      *“Goodness Is Stronger than Evil”*                      **ELW #721**

*(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 at <https://felcdecatur.org/give>, or by mail.)*

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

P: Creator God,  
**C: in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good  
and the harvest is plentiful.  
Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth  
and our labor, that we may work for the good of all;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

## **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.  
Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection,  
you pour out the fire of your Spirit,  
uniting in one body people of every nation and tongue.  
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter  
and all the witnesses of the resurrection  
With earth and sea and all their creatures,  
and with angels and archangels,  
cherubim, and seraphim,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

**ELW p. 130**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

P: 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.



## LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p. 145

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

*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 p. 135

## \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Mothering God,

**C: you gathered us to your table  
and we drank deeply of your grace.  
Send us out by your Spirit  
to love our neighbors as ourselves  
and proclaim your love in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## SENDING

## \*BLESSING

P: The love of God abound in you;  
the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts;  
and the life of the Spirit  
✠ bless you and give you peace.

**C: Amen.**

## \*SENDING HYMN

*"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"*

ELW #502

## \*DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Live by the Spirit

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## \*POSTLUDE

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## Prayer Requests

Connie Andrews, Matt Andrews & Family,  
Dave Bachmann, Peg Books, Brandon Ellison,  
Esther Gregory, Paul Kopetz, Jan Lawson,  
Jarrod Renfro, Pastor Barbara Stroud-Borth,  
Dennis Tangney, Mary Ann Stolley, Ken Stolley,  
Rick Strine, Renee Wiedenkiller, Rudy Zucker Sr.

*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

- **Welcome to Pastor Janet Lepp** who is preaching and presiding this morning. And we are thrilled that you will be serving as the Supervising Pastor for Claire Vail. We are anxious for both of you to start in September.
- **Exec Team** meets Monday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.
- **The AMELCA** team served 94 clients on Wednesday, August 6<sup>th</sup>.

- **New Book Study** is scheduled to begin September 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:15pm in the Lounge. The book we will be reading is “*The Mary We Forgot*” by Jennifer Powell McNutt. Please email ([felc\\_decatur@outlook.com](mailto:felc_decatur@outlook.com)) or call (217-423-7783) the church office if you would like to attend or want a copy of the book. Kay needs a count to know how many books to order. Thank you!
- **Name Badges** have been made for all names on the check-in sheet. Please pick up your name badge when you check-in. We’re asking everyone to wear a name badge each Sunday for the next few months. Please do not take your name badge home; drop it off at the check-in table as you leave.
- **Son Rise Café** needs hosts & hostesses! Nothing elaborate is required – just the desire to extend a little fellowship. Some suggestions have been fruit, or cheese & crackers, baked goods, etc. There’s a new signup sheet on the bulletin board, so I hope you feel ‘nudged’ to sponsor a Sunday. Thank you for your contribution!
- We still have dates available for anyone that would want to sponsor **Altar Flowers** on a Sunday. The flower chart is hanging on the bulletin board.
- **August 31<sup>st</sup> is our next Joint Worship Service** with Holy Cross, held here at FELC. Pastor Amy Zietlow and Deacon Jason Fisher will be preaching & presiding. There will be SonRise Café following worship.

**Let us Prepare our Hearts and Minds for Worship**

## Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Pastor Janet Lepp
Assisting Minister	Janice Isaacs
Slides	Jim Oettel
Organist/Bell Choir Director	Rick Strine
Interim Choir Director	Milt Scott
Technical Director	Mason Oliver
Audio/Visual	Abbey Jordan & Audio/Visual Team
Bell Ringer	Mike Reynolds
Greeter	John & Lin Malachowski
Check-In	Carol Tyler
Acolyte	Karen Reynolds
Communion Aide	Gary Beck
Money Counters	Gary Beck, Larry Haab, Sheryl Brilley
Flowers	Jim & Judy Oettel Celebrating their 63 <sup>rd</sup> Anniversary