

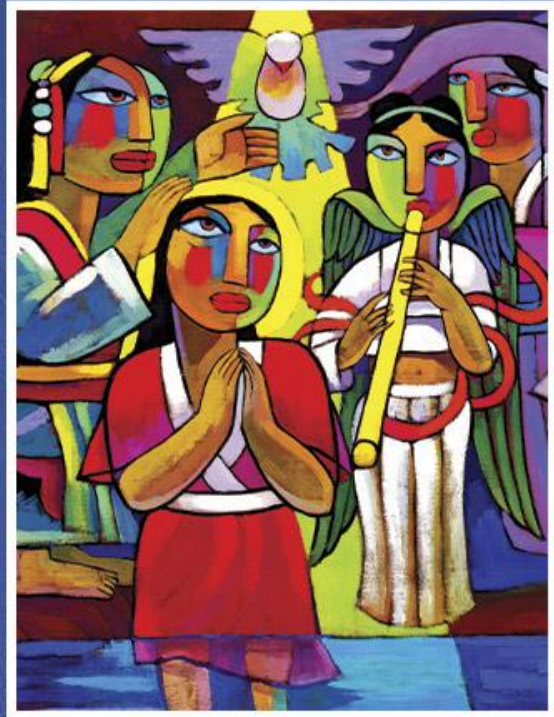
**First Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 W. Decatur St.
Decatur, Illinois
(217) 423-7783**

**Website: www.felcdecatur.org
Email: felc_decatur@outlook.com**

*We have a livestream option on our website!
<https://felcdecatur.org/live>*

**THIS IS
MY SON,
THE
BELOVED**

MATTHEW 3:17



**January 11, 2026, at 9:30am
HOLY COMMUNION**

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

INTRODUCTION

In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
the Word who spoke life into being,
the Wind stirring the waters.

C: Amen.

P: Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.
Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Mighty God, lover of justice,

**C: you call us to life in community,
but we have served our own interests
at the expense of our neighbors.
We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.
We say the right words,
but our hearts are far from you.
Turn us to seek your face.
Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,
that we may do justice, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

P: The former things have passed away,
and new things God now declares:
Like a spring of water that never fails,
God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,
and forgives your sin in ✠ Jesus' name.
May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,
and bless you with the gift of peace.

C: Amen.

***GATHERING SONG**

“Shall We Gather at the River”

ELW #423

GREETING

ELW p. 98

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.

***KYRIE**

ELW p. 98-99

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

“Glory To God”

ELW p. 99-100

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray,

C: O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-9

God’s servant is endowed with God’s spirit in order to bring justice to the nations. The servant will not exercise authority boisterously or with violence, nor will weariness ever prevent the fulfilling of the servant’s task. God’s old promises have been fulfilled; the servant’s new assignment is to bring light to the nations.

¹ Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

² He will not cry out or lift up his voice
or make it heard in the street;

³ a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth,
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

⁵ Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it

- and spirit to those who walk in it:
- ⁶ I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,
- ⁷ to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
- ⁸ I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.
- ⁹ See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 29

- ¹ Ascribe to the LORD, you gods,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- ² **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God's name;
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.**
- ³ The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.
- ⁴ **The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.**
- ⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- ⁶ **the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**
- ⁷ The voice of the LORD
bursts forth in lightning flashes.
- ⁸ **The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**
- ⁹ The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are crying, "Glory!"
- ¹⁰ **The LORD sits enthroned above the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forevermore.**
- ¹¹ O LORD, give strength to your people;
give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

Second Reading: Acts 10:34-43

Peter crosses the sharp religious boundary separating Jews from Gentiles and proclaims the good news of God's inclusive forgiveness in Jesus' name to Cornelius, a Roman centurion. As a result of Peter's preaching, Cornelius and his family become the first Gentiles to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

³⁴ Peter began to speak to Cornelius and his household: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

"Alleluia"

ELW p. 102

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew the 3rd Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

Before Jesus begins his ministry, he is baptized by John, touched by the Spirit, and identified publicly as God's child.

¹³ Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him.

¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented.

¹⁶ And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him.

¹⁷ And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY

“Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters”

ELW #445

*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

P: As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

A: Steadfast God, give courage to your servant church. Heal our divisions and unite us in mission. Uphold our lay leaders, missionaries, pastors, and bishops, and all who proclaim hope in a broken world. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Restoring God, cleanse the life-giving waters of rivers, seas, and springs. Create in us an urgent desire to preserve the beauty and bounty of your good creation. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Righteous God, you guide the nations. Reconcile warring enemies and end cycles of violent retribution. Defend the rights of prisoners, detainees, and all who flee from persecution. Sustain international aid workers and peacemakers. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Compassionate God, you care for all in distress. Provide safety and support for those seeking asylum or in need of shelter. Be near to the dying, and comfort all who are grieving or ill. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Loving God, awaken the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation, that we may serve Christ by loving one another, our neighbors, and our enemies. We pray for travelers and those who are homebound. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Promising God, in baptism we die and rise with Christ. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, and we trust that we will join them in your everlasting peace. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God of Justice and Righteousness, you sent your Son, Jesus, into the world as a light to the nations. Shine the light of Christ in and through our siblings in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land as they install today their new presiding bishop, the Reverend Doctor Imad Haddad. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon Bishop Haddad and upon all those participating in his installation, including Bishop Curry and Bishop Busboom. Renew in Christians around the world a commitment to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer

P: Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

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

OFFERING PRAYER

P: God of Majesty,

**C: no eye has seen, no ear has heard
what you have prepared for those who love you,
yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy.
Use what we have gathered
to feed us with the reign of God come near,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan
you proclaimed him your beloved Son, and in the miracle of water turned to wine he
revealed your glory.

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 p. 108

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: You molded us in your image,
and with mercy higher than the mountains,
with grace deeper than the seas,
you blessed the Israelites and cherished them as your own.

That also we, estranged and dying,
might be adopted to live in your Spirit,
you called to us through the life and death of Jesus.

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.

Together as the body of Christ,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:

C: Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Son,
the first-born of your new creation.
We remember his life lived for others,
and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth.
We await his coming,
when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom,
all our sins and sorrows will be no more.

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Holy God, holy and merciful one, holy and compassionate,
send upon us and this meal your Holy Spirit,
whose breath revives us for life,
whose fire rouses us to love.
Enfold in your arms all who share this holy food.
Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit,
that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty with all the world.

C: Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

P: Holy and benevolent God,
receive our praise and petitions,
as Jesus received the cry of the needy,
and fill us with your blessing,
until, needy no longer and bound to you in love,
we feast forever in the triumph of the Lamb:
through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God, O Living One,
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, now and forever.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p. 112

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Come to the table; taste and see.

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. 112-113

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Radiant God,

C: we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

**In the sacrament of his body and blood
you have drawn us to your heart.**

**Send us from this table with delight,
that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,
and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

***EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

P: In the name of God:

**C: 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**

P: May the triune God,
who has put a new song in your mouth
and tuned your heart for praise
✠ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

***SENDING HYMN**

“Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”

ELW #310

***DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

C: Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**

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Prayer Requests

Connie Andrews, Matt Andrews & Family, Peg Books, Leslie Cassity,
Family & Friends of Kandy Donahue, Sandy Fitzgerrel, Esther Gregory,
Charlotte Hubbard, Paul Kopetz, Jan Lawson, Marilyn Oftedal,
RuthAnn & Don Ruby, Mary Ann Stolley, Ken Stolley, Rick Strine, 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.*

Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Minister Claire Vail
Assisting Minister	Carol Tyler
Slides	Bob Tyler
Organist/Bell Choir Director	Rick Strine
Interim Choir Director	Milton Scott
Technical Director	Mason Oliver
Audio/Visual	Abbey Jordan & Audio/Visual Team
Bell Ringer	Mike Reynolds
Greeter	Patricia Cox
Check-In	Donna Donahue & Jean Mikels
Acolyte	Ensley Dalen
Communion Aide	Jane Cade
Money Counters	Bob & Judy Carney and Mike Corley
Flowers	Molly Berry in Honor of Finnick's 3 rd Birthday

Welcome to everyone here and to those participating on-line

Announcements

- **2026 Offering envelopes** are on the check-in table in the Narthex. Please pick up your packet of envelopes.
- **Lenten Survey** is an insert in your bulletin today. Please complete and leave in the contribution basket in the rear of the church.
- **Our AMELCA Team** worked every Wednesday in December, giving out food bags to our neighbors. On Christmas Eve they gave out 70 bags & New Year's Eve they gave out 68 bags. This week 114 bags were distributed. We truly appreciate this dedicated team of Faithful Servants.
- **Grief Group** meets Monday, January 12th at 11:00am in the Lounge.
- **Personnel Committee** meets Wednesday, January 14th at 3:45pm in the Lounge.
- **Art Workshop** meets Thursday, January 15th at 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.
- **FELC Finance Committee** meets Thursday, January 15th at 4:00pm via zoom.
- **Dove Finance Committee** meets Thursday, January 15th at 4:00pm in the Lounge.
- **The church office will be closed on Friday, January 16th and Monday, January 19th.**
- **Book Study** meets on Monday, January 19th at 12:15pm in the Lounge. We are reading "*The Separation of Church and Hate*" by John Fugelsang. Please notify Kay in the church office if you want a copy of the book.
- **FELC Church Council** meets Monday, January 19th at 6:00pm in the Lounge.
- **Annual Congregation Meeting** will be after worship service on Sunday, January 25th.

Let us Prepare our Hearts and Minds for Worship