

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



**January 18, 2026, at 9:30am
HOLY COMMUNION**

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

INTRODUCTION

Today's gospel opens with further reflection on Jesus' baptism. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and the one anointed by the Spirit. In the liturgy we come and see Christ revealed among us in word and meal. We go forth to invite others to come and worship the Holy One and to receive the gifts of grace and peace made known among us.

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**

“Arise, Your Light Has Come”

ELW #314

- 1 Arise, your light has come!**
The Spirit's call obey; show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.
- 2 Arise, your light has come!**
Fling wide the prison door; proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.
- 3 Arise, your light has come!**
All you in sorrow born, bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.
- 4 Arise, your light has come!**
The mountains burst in song! Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

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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: Holy God, our strength and our redeemer, by your Spirit hold us forever, that through your grace we may worship you and faithfully serve you, follow you and joyfully find you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

Here the servant, identified as Israel, speaks for herself and describes her honored mission. Called before her birth like Jeremiah and John the Baptist, the servant is not only to restore Israel. The servant's ultimate assignment is to bring news of God's victory to the ends of the earth. God in faithfulness has chosen Israel for this task.

¹ Listen to me, O coastlands;
pay attention, you peoples from far away!
The LORD called me before I was born;
while I was in my mother's womb he named me.
² He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
³ And he said to me, "You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified."
⁴ But I said, "I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my cause is with the LORD
and my reward with my God."
⁵ And now the LORD says,
who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
⁶ he says,
"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."
⁷ Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,
the slave of rulers,
"Kings shall see and stand up;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 40:1-11

¹ I waited patiently upon the LORD,
who stooped to me and heard my cry.
² **The LORD lifted me out of the desolate pit, out of the miry clay,
and set my feet upon a high cliff, making my footing sure.**
³ The LORD put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God;
many shall see, and stand in awe, and put their trust in the LORD.

⁴ Happy are they who trust in the LORD!

They do not turn to enemies or to those who follow lies.

⁵ Great are the wonders you have done, O LORD my God! In your plans for us, none can be compared with you! Oh, that I could make them known and tell them! But they are more than I can count.

⁶ Sacrifice and offering you do not desire; you have opened my ears: burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required.

⁷ And so I said, “Here I am; I come.

In the scroll of the book it is written of me:

**⁸ ‘I love to do your will, O my God;
your law is deep within me.’ ”**

⁹ I proclaimed righteousness in the great assembly;
I have not restrained my lips, O LORD, you know.

¹⁰ I have not hidden your righteousness in my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your deliverance; I have not concealed your steadfast love and truth from the great assembly.

¹¹ You are the LORD; do not withhold your compassion from me;
may your steadfast love and your truth continually keep me safe.

ANTHEM

“Just When We Truly Needed Peace”

John Carter

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Though God’s church in Corinth is a fractious congregation beset with many conflicts, Paul opens this letter by spotlighting the multiple ways God has enriched and sustained its life as part of the divine call into the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind ⁶ just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

“Alleluia”

ELW p. 102

P: The holy gospel according to John the 1st Chapter.

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

Gospel: John 1:29-42

John the Baptist's witness to Jesus initiates a chain of testimony as his disciples begin to share with others what they have found.

²⁹ John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Behold, here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." ³² And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One."

³⁵ The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" which is translated Peter.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

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

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

"Jesus Calls Us; o'er the Tumult"

ELW #696

- 1 Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea,
day by day his clear voice sounding, saying, "Christian, follow me":**
- 2 As of old Saint Andrew heard it by the Galilean lake,
turned from home and toil and kindred, leaving all for Jesus' sake.**
- 3 Jesus calls us from the worship of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us, saying, "Christian, love me more."**
- 4 In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,
still he calls, in cares and pleasures, "Christian, love me more than these."**

**5 Jesus calls us! By your mercy, Savior, may we hear your call,
give our hearts to your obedience, serve and love you best of all.**

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895

***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: Gracious God, gather the church into one great fellowship. Equip your people to work together for justice and peace, following the example of Martin Luther King Jr., renewer of society, whose birth we remember this week. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Creating God, sustain the web of life on this planet. Protect wild places, endangered species, and vulnerable habitats. Come to the aid of those affected by natural disasters. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Just God, you desire respect and equality for everyone. Raise up prophets who speak truth to the nations. Embolden leaders and those in authority to advocate for people in need. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Healing God, you lift up those who are bowed down by trouble, oppression, or illness. Bring an end to social injustice and inequities of every kind, so that all people may have abundant life. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Abiding God, you are present with this congregation. Keep us mindful of our mission and guide our ministries in this community. Kindle in us a desire to help one another. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Faithful God, you promise to be with us always. We remember with gratitude the faithful departed who now rest in you. Strengthen us to the end, that we may see you face to face. 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 ANTHEM

*"Lamb of God"
"Behold The Lamb"*

**ELW p. 112-113
Keith & Kristyn Getty**

***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.

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**

“How Marvelous God’s Greatness”

ELW #830

- 1 How marvelous God's greatness, how glorious God's might!
To this the world bears witness in wonders day and night:
in form of flow'r and snowflake, in morn's resplendent birth,
in afterglow at ev'ning, in sky and sea and earth.**
- 2 Each tiny flow'ret whispers, the great life-giver's name;
the mighty mountain masses his majesty proclaim;
the valleys deep are hymning God's shelter for his own;
the snow-capped peaks are pointing to God's almighty throne.**
- 3 The ocean's vast abysses in one grand psalm record
the deep mysterious counsels, and mercies of the Lord;
the icy waves of winter are thund'ring on the strand;
and grief's chill stream is guided by God's all-gracious hand.**
- 4 The starry hosts are singing through all the light-strewn sky
of God's majestic temple and palace courts on high;
when in these outer chambers such glory gilds the night,
oh, what transcendent brightness is God's eternal light!**

Text: Valdimar Briem, 1848-1930; tr. Charles V. Pilcher, 1879-1961, alt.
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***DISMISSAL**

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

C: Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**

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Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Minister Claire Vail
Assisting Minister	Janice Isaacs
Slides	Ruth Nihiser
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	Dick & Donna Donahue
Check-In	Donna Donahue & Jean Mikels
Acolyte	Gemma Berry
Communion Aide	Bill Fitzgerald
Money Counters	Bob & Judy Carney and Mike Corley

Prayer Requests

Connie Andrews, Matt Andrews & Family, Peg Books, Leslie Cassity,
Sandy Fitzgerald, 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.*

Welcome to everyone here and to those participating on-line

Announcements

- **The church office will be closed Monday, January 19th** in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
- **Book Study** meets Monday, January 19th at 12:15pm in the Lounge. We are reading “*Separation of Church and Hate*” by John Fugelsang. Contact Kay in the office if you are interested in joining the group so she can order a book for you.
- **FELC Church Council** meets Monday, January 19th at 6:00pm in the Lounge.
- **Carpet Cleaning** around the Altar & in the office is Tuesday, January 20th. Please do not walk on the carpeted areas that day.
- **Personnel** meets Wednesday, January 21st at 3:30pm in the Lounge.
- **Explore Team** meets, January 22nd at 5:00pm at FELC in the Lounge.
- **Annual Congregation Meeting** will be after worship service on Sunday, January 25th.
- **The AMELCA Team** served 66 clients on Wednesday, January 14th

Let us Prepare our Hearts and Minds for Worship