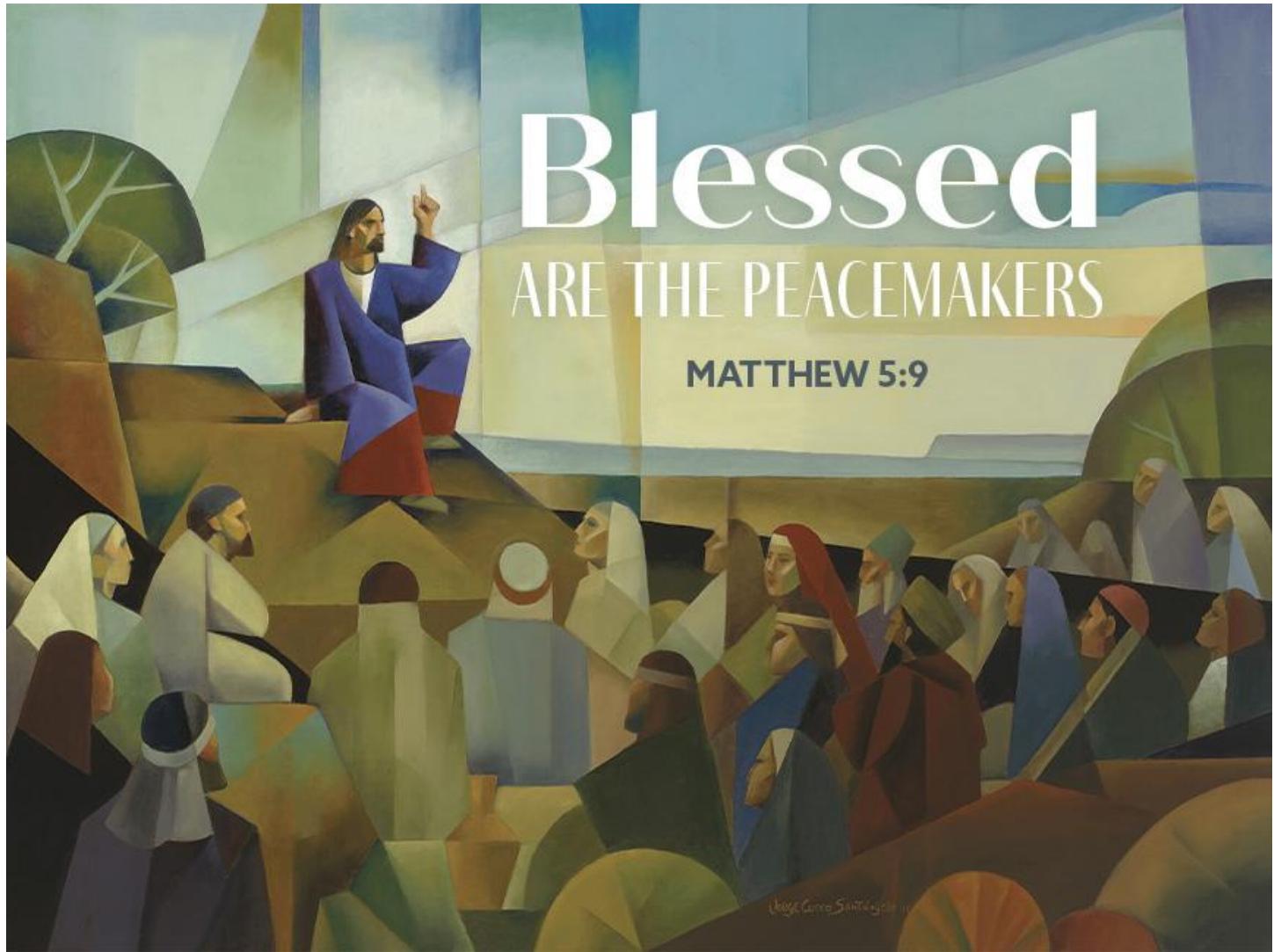


**First Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 W. Decatur St.
Decatur, Illinois
(217) 423-7783
Website: www.felcdecatur.org
Email: felc_decatur@outlook.com**

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



**February 1, 2026, at 9:30am
HOLY COMMUNION**

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

INTRODUCTION

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

GATHERING

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, \dagger 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 \dagger Jesus' name.
May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,
and bless you with the gift of peace.

C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG“As We Gather at Your Table”***ELW #522**

**1 As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's vict'ry known.**

**2 Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.**

**3 Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.**

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

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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***“This is the Feast”***ELW p. 101*****PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray,

C: Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON**WORD****First Reading: Micah 6:1-8**

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has “wearied” Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.

¹ Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

² Hear, you mountains, the case of the Lord,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,
for the Lord has a case against his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

³ “O my people, what have I done to you?
In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴ For I brought you up from the land of Egypt
and redeemed you from the house of slavery,
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵ O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the Lord.”

⁶ “With what shall I come before the Lord
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 15

¹ Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

**² Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

³ they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

**⁴ In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the Lord.
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

⁵ They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

¹⁸ The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, ²⁹ so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

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 5th Chapter.

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

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY

“Canticle of the Turning”

ELW #723

**1 My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?**

Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

**2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn.**

Refrain

**3 From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r, not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain***

**4 Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. *Refrain***

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat

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*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: God our wisdom, renew the church in the power of the Spirit, that it may do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and boldly proclaim Christ crucified. We pray for social justice and humanitarian aid ministries. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our source, we honor you by caring wisely for your creation. We pray for the health of old growth forests, ice caps, and ocean currents. Preserve the diversity of life on earth. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our righteousness, raise up visionary leaders who serve with integrity and respect human rights. Increase freedom in every nation. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are reviled for speaking truth. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our advocate, you give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty, or war. Reunite separated families and bring orphaned children to safety. Comfort any who grieve or suffer in any way. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our blessing, we pray for the children and youth of this congregation, and for parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers, and youth ministers who model love for their neighbor and care for others. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our joy, we give thanks for the lives of those before us who journeyed humbly with you. 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.**

***EUCARISTIC MINISTERS**

P: In the name of God:

**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“To Be Your Presence ”***ELW #546**

**1 To be your presence is our mission here, to show compassion's face and list'ning ear,
to be your heart of mercy ever near, alleluia!**

**2 To be your presence is our mission bold, to feed the poor and shelter homeless cold,
to be your hands of justice, right uphold, alleluia!**

**3 To be your presence is our mission blest, to speak for all the broken and oppressed,
to be your voice of hope, your love expressed, alleluia!**

**4 We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice, to serve your people is our call and
choice, and in this mission we, the church, rejoice,
alleluia!**

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939
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***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,
Esther Gregory, Paul Kopetz, Jan Lawson, Marilyn Oftedal,
RuthAnn & Don Ruby, Sebastian (Bass) Smallwood,
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	Lucas Reynolds
Slides	Bill Fitzgerrel
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	Bruce & Tami Cannon
Check-In	Bob & Carol Tyler
Acolyte	Gemma Berry
Communion Aide	
Money Counters	Arlene Mannlein & Gary Beck
Son Rise Café	Allgeier Family

Welcome to everyone here and to those participating on-line

Announcements

- **Annual Congregation Meeting and Foundation Annual Meeting has moved.** It will be held after worship service on Sunday, February 15th. Please stay in the sanctuary for the meeting.
- **The AMELCA Team** served 95 clients on Wednesday, January 28th.
- **Book Study** meets Monday, February 2nd at 12:15pm in the Lounge. Please read Chapters 1-2, *“The Separation of Church and Hate”*.
- **We need Hosts for MEG!** We do not have hosts signed up for our upcoming Meet, Eat & Greet monthly lunches. The church will reimburse you for your expenses. The Sign-up sheet is on the table by the front door. Our next lunch is scheduled for February 12th. Please consider signing up as a Host. Thank you!!

Let us Prepare our Hearts and Minds for Worship