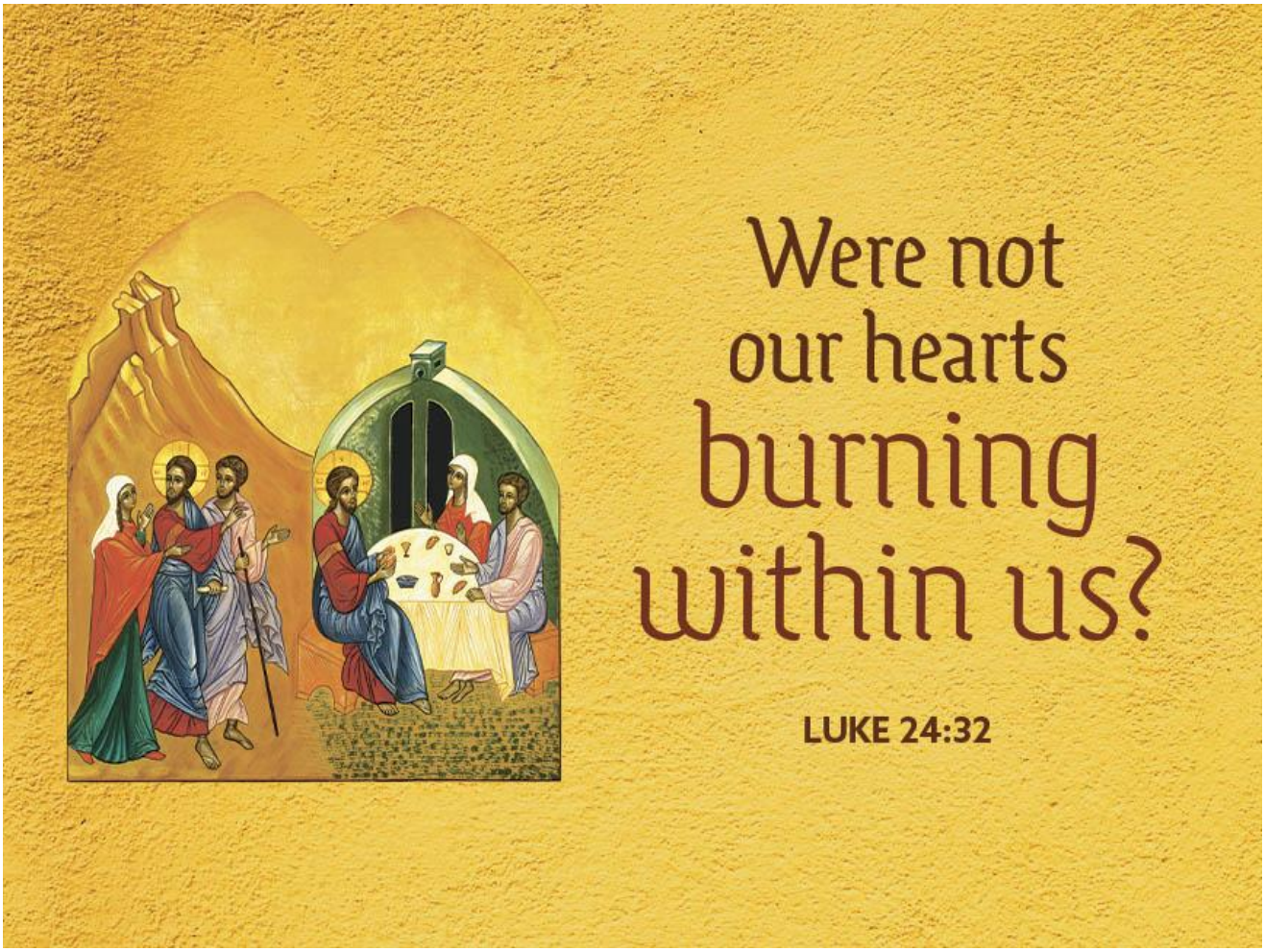
JOINT WORSHIP SERVICE
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

April 19, 2026, at 9:30am
Third Sunday of Easter
Holy Communion

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



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Decatur, IL 62522
217- 423-7783
Website: www.felcdecatur.org
Email: felc_decatur@outlook.com
We have a livestream option
on our website!
https://felcdecatur.org/live

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
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INTRODUCTION
Today's gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord's day.

WELCOME

PRELUDE *"Morning Has Broken"* **arr. Derek Haydn**

GATHERING

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM
All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.
C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne
and to the Lamb!
C: Amen.

P: Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.
Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister continues.

P: Merciful God,
you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come.
You lead us beside still waters.
We thank you for the waters of creation:
morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves.
We thank you for the waters that nourish us. Blessed are you.
C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness
who accompanies us on our journeys.
We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection.
We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow. Blessed are you.
C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows.
Break down barriers that divide us.
Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you.
C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism,
and for making us a new creation.
We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise,
now and forever.
C: Amen.

***GATHERING SONG** *"That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright"* **ELW #384**

1 That Easter day with joy was bright;
the sun shone out with fairer light
when, to their longing eyes restored,
th'apostles saw their risen Lord!

2 O Jesus, king of gentleness,
with constant love our hearts possess;
to you our lips will ever raise
the tribute of our grateful praise.

3 O Christ, you are the Lord of all
in this our Easter festival,
for you will be our strength and shield
from ev'ry weapon death can wield.

4 All praise, O risen Lord, we give
to you, once dead, but now alive!
To God the Father equal praise,
and God the Spirit, now we raise!

Text: Latin hymn, 5th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.

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. 140-141**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray,

C: O God, your Son makes himself known to all his disciples in the breaking of bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming work, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FLUTE ANTHEM *"Be Thou My Vision"* **arr. Sondra Tucker**

WORD

First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Today's reading is the conclusion of Peter's sermon preached following the giving of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The center of his preaching is the bold declaration that God has made the crucified Jesus both Lord and Christ.

14a Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]:
36 "Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" 38 Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." 40 And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41 So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

1 I love the LORD, who has heard my voice,
and listened to my supplication,
2 **for the LORD has given ear to me**
whenever I called.
3 The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me;
I came to grief and sorrow.
4 **Then I called upon the name of the LORD:**
"O LORD, I pray you, save my life."

12 How shall I repay the LORD
for all the good things God has done for me?
13 **I will lift the cup of salvation**
and call on the name of the LORD.
14 I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all God's people.
15 **Precious in your sight, O LORD,**
is the death of your servants.
16 O LORD, truly I am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.
17 **I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving**
and call upon the name of the LORD.
18 I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all God's people,
19 **in the courts of the LORD's house,**
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-23

The imagery of exile is used to help the readers of this letter understand that they are strangers in a strange land. Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our focus, faith, and hope are no longer on such things as silver or gold.

17 If you invoke as Father the one who judges impartially according to each person's
work, live in fear during the time of your exile. 18 You know that you were ransomed
from the futile conduct inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like
silver or gold 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or
blemish. 20 He was destined before the foundation of the world but was revealed at the
end of the ages for your sake. 21 Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised
him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your trust and hope are in God.
22 Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you
have genuine mutual affection, love one another deeply from the heart. 23 You have been
born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring
word of God.

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 24th Chapter.
C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

The colorful story of Jesus' appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus answers the question of how Jesus is to be recognized among us. Here, he is revealed through the scriptures and in the breaking of bread.

13 Now on that same day two disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about
seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had
happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went
with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them,
"What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still,
looking sad. 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the
only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in
these days?" 19 He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of
Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,
20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and
crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides
all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of
our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did
not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of
angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb
and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." 25 Then he said to
them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets
have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and
then enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he
interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he
were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost
evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was
at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then
their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight.
32 They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to
us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" 33 That same hour they got up
and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered
together. 34 They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to
Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made
known to them in the breaking of the bread.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON - GUEST SPEAKER MAIZEE MILLER, LSSI

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *"We Come to the Hungry Feast"* **ELW #479**

1 We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a word of peace.
To hungry hearts unsatisfied
the love of God is not denied.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

2 We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a world released
from hungry folk of ev'ry kind,
the poor in body, poor in mind.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

3 We come to the hungry feast
hungry that the hunger cease,
and knowing, though we eat our fill,
the hunger will stay with us; still
we come, we come to the hungry feast.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943
Text © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

***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: Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

A brief silence

A: Living Savior, just as you journeyed with the disciples to Emmaus, accompany us on our journey of faith. Gather us at your table, that we recognize you in the breaking of the bread. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Almighty God, you provide for the needs of all creation. Bless the fields that are being prepared for planting, and send favorable weather so that the soil may yield an abundant harvest. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God of justice, where leaders abuse power, confront them and call them to repentance. Where there is corruption, bring integrity; where there is violence, sow peace. We pray especially for peace in the Middle East and Ukraine. Send wisdom to our leaders that they may strive for peace and justice in all the world. Guard and protect those serving in the armed forces. Comfort the families who have lost loved ones in conflict. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Healing Savior, your resurrection brings hope to a hurting world. Heal those who are sick. Strengthen the weary, give courage to the despairing, and comfort the dying. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Gracious One, you have made us your own through the gift of baptism. Unite us in genuine love for one another and uphold this community in your name. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Eternal Light, we give thanks for all who have nurtured your church's life in ages past. Bring us at last with them to the brightness of your glorious presence. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

P: God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

C: Amen.

***PEACE**

MEAL

OFFERING Selection From *"A Gaelic Offering"* **Catherine McMichael**

(*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: Merciful God,
C: accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory.
You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day
when we will hunger and thirst no more.
Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus,
that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love.
In the name of Jesus. Amen.

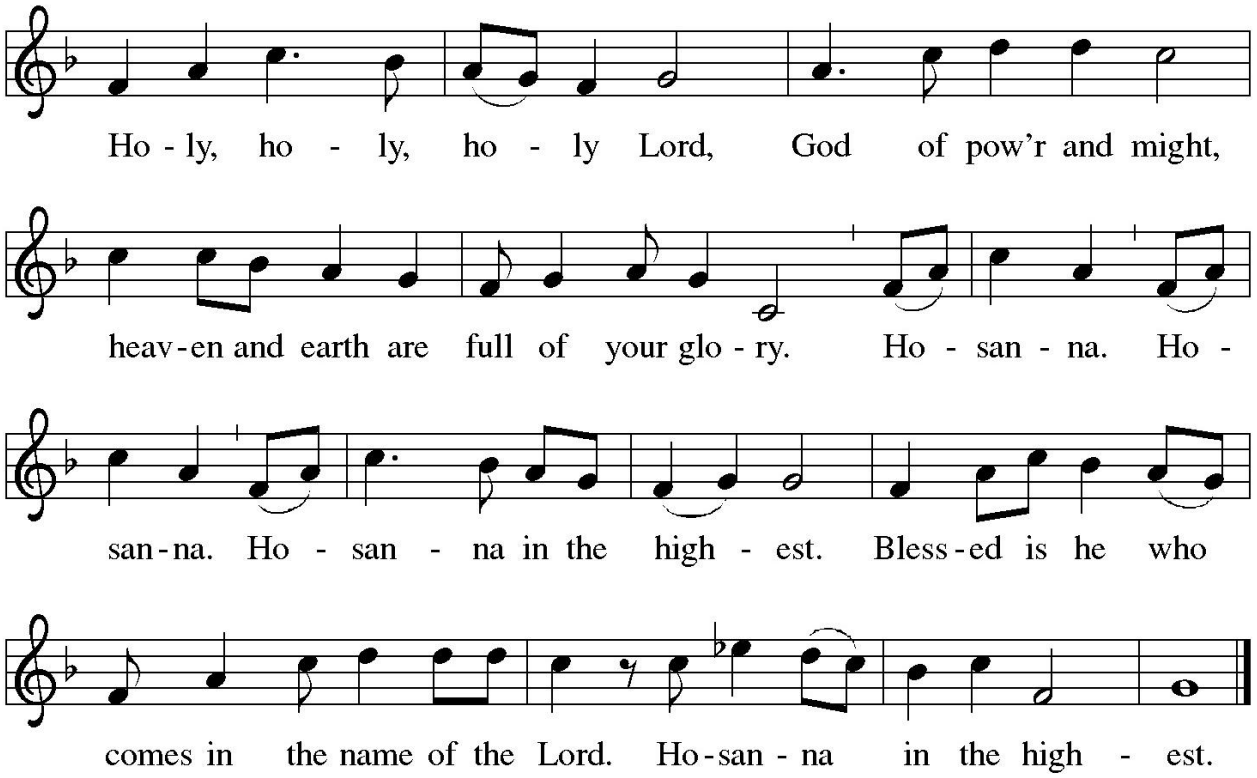
GREAT THANKSGIVING
P: The Lord be with you.
C: And also with you.

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,
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin,
who in dying has destroyed death,
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter
and all the witnesses of the resurrection,
with earth and sea and all their creatures,
with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY **ELW p. 144**



WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: Holy God, mighty and merciful,
your people praise you, saying:
Your mercy endures forever.
C: Your mercy endures forever.

P: By your promise
you bound yourself to earth and all its creatures,
granting them life and calling them to flourish,
setting the sign of your bow in the clouds,
the colors of your love and faithfulness.
Your mercy endures forever.
C: Your mercy endures forever.

P: By your promise
you bound yourself to your people of old,
blessing them with family outnumbering the stars
and calling them to be a blessing to others,
showing them steadfast love in every generation
and calling them to be a light to the nations.
Your mercy endures forever.
C: Your mercy endures forever.

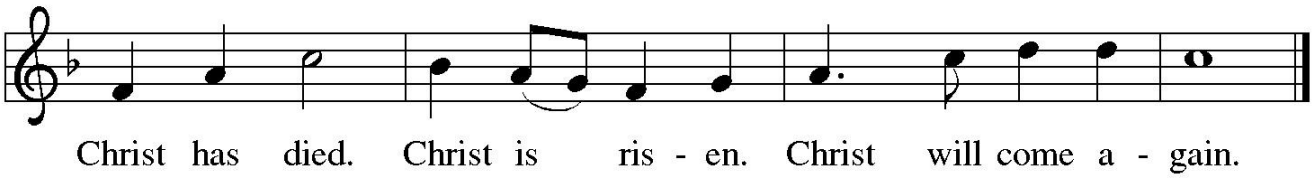
P: By your promise
you joined us to Jesus, your Beloved,
grafting us into your living Vine,
and calling us to bear the fruit of your self-giving love.

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.

With this bread and cup
we remember his life laid down and lifted up
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

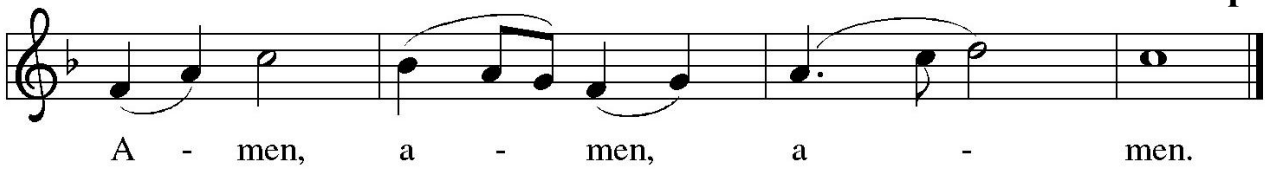
C: **ELW p. 145**



P: Send your Holy Spirit upon us
and these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless us to be a blessing.
Make us a sign of your faithfulness.
Send us to tend and cherish the earth
and to serve the world with mercy and love.

With all the saints in light,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God, through Christ Jesus,
in your Spirit, now and forever.

C: **ELW p. 145**



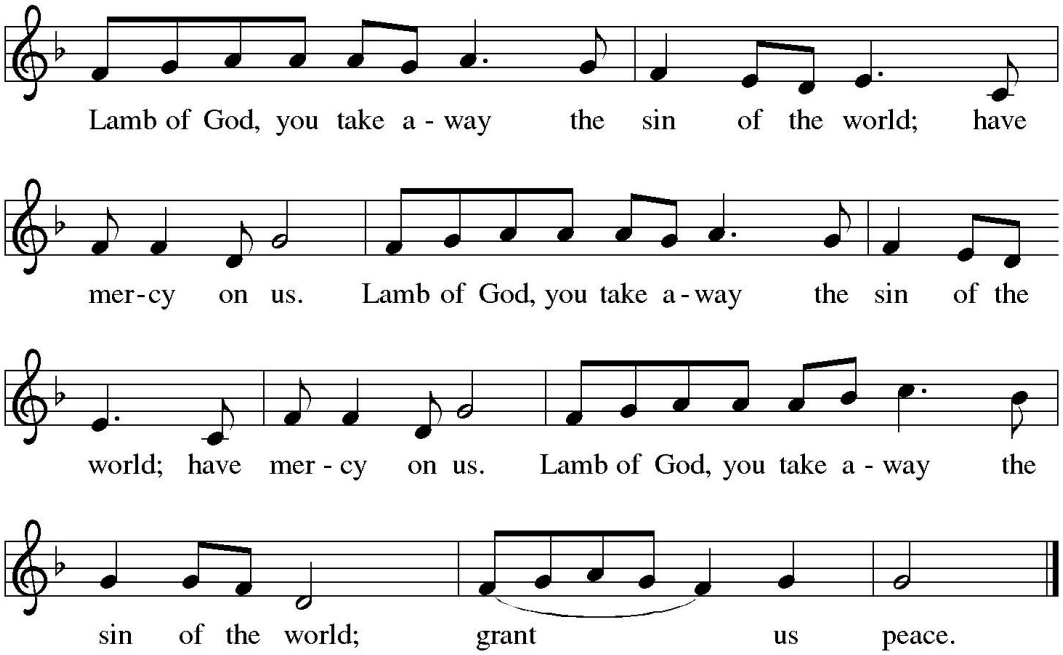
LORD'S PRAYER **ELW p. 145**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

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. 146**



FLUTE *"A Gaelic Offering #2"*

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Holy One,

C: through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING

***BLESSING**

P: God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,
Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,
and the Spirit, our advocate and peace,
☩ bless you now and forever.
C: Amen.

***SENDING HYMN** *"Alleluia! Sing to Jesus"* **ELW #392**

1 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
his the scepter, his the throne;
Alleluia! his the triumph,
his the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
thunder like a mighty flood:
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation
has redeemed us by his blood."

2 Alleluia! Not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia! he is near us;
faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received him
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise:
"I am with you evermore"?

3 Alleluia! Bread of heaven,
here on earth our food, our stay;
Alleluia! here the sinful
flee to you from day to day.
Intercessor, friend of sinners,
earth's redeemer, hear our plea
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.

4 Alleluia! King eternal,
Lord omnipotent we own;
Alleluia! born of Mary,
earth your footstool, heav'n your throne.
As within the veil you entered,
robed in flesh, our great high priest,
here on earth both priest and victim
in the eucharistic feast.

5 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
his the scepter, his the throne;
Alleluia! his the triumph,
his the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
thunder like a mighty flood:
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation
has redeemed us by his blood."

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898, alt.

***DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!!

C: Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE** *Ashokan Farewell* **Jay Unger**
(Civil War Tune) **arr. Ricky Lombardo**

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Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Minister Claire Vail
Guest Speaker	Maizee Miller, LSSI
Assisting Minister	Carol Tyler
Slides	Bob Tyler
Organist/Bell Choir Director	Rick Strine
Interim Choir Director	Milton Scott
2nd Wind Flutes	Mary Little, Conductor
	Jennifer Marrow
	Rhonda Hutchens
	Iris Leahy
	Kaylee Sommer
	Mitchell Yaksh
Technical Director	Mason Oliver
Audio/Visual	Abbey Jordan & Audio/Visual Team
Bell Ringer	Steve Wenger
Greeter	Patricia Cox
Check-In	John & Lin Malachowski and Janice Isaacs
Acolyte	Gemma Berry
Communion Aide	Kris Sites
Money Counters	Jay Rowley and Mike & Marsha Corley
Flowers	Nancy Salefski given in Memory of her Mother
SonRise Café	FELC Explore Team

Everyone is welcome to join us for Fellowship after Worship Service in the Fellowship Hall. See you there!!

Special LSSI Collection for Victorian Woods, Senior Housing

This Sunday we have special envelopes for an opportunity to support Victorian Woods, a ministry of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI).

Victorian Woods, located at 3910 W. Main St. in Decatur (across from the former Scovill Golf Course), provides 59 one-bedroom apartments for low-income seniors age 62 and older who meet income guidelines.

Donations will directly support residents through social events, holiday meals, and pantry items. Many residents do not have family nearby, so these gatherings bring meaningful connection, joy, and a sense of community.

Please consider making a donation by cash or check. Checks can be made payable to FELC or HC, with “LSSI” noted in the memo line.

Donations can be placed in the offering baskets at the back of the church, or during our fellowship after worship service, or next Sunday when we celebrate LSSI Good Shepherd Sunday.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

FELC Prayer Requests

Barb Ahlenius, Connie Andrews, Matt Andrews & Family,
Peg Books, Jeanie Dennis, Darlene Ducharme, Bill Fitzgerrel,
Dennis Gregory, Esther Gregory, Jan Lawson, Sharon Lindeman,
RuthAnn & Don Ruby, Sebastian (Bass) Smallwood,
Mary Ann Stolley, Ken Stolley, Rick Strine, Mary Wolf, Rudy Zucker Sr.

If you'd like to add someone to the Prayer Request list, please contact Kay at the FELC office.
Prayer requests remain on the list for 3 weeks and can be extended longer at your request.

FELC Announcements

- **Welcome to our Holy Cross family and to Maizee Miller of LSSI**. Maizee is presenting during the Sermon timeframe this morning.

- **Congregational Call Meeting – May 3rd**
  A special congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, May 3, immediately following worship in the sanctuary. The purpose of this meeting is to vote on the call of a pastoral candidate. All voting members are encouraged to attend and participate in this important moment in the life of our church. Zoom will be available for voting members who cannot attend in person. Please plan to stay after worship as we gather in prayerful discernment and shared responsibility for our future.

- You have an opportunity to meet our Pastoral Candidate and her family on Saturday, April 25th from 4:00pm – 6:00pm at FELC. Please take time out of your busy schedule to join us.

- **The AMELCA TEAM** served 81 clients on Wednesday, April 15th.

- **Book Study** meets Monday, April 20th at 12:15pm in the Lounge.

- **FELC Church Council** meets Monday, April 20th at 6:00pm.

- Next Sunday, we will be putting together "**Finals Care Packages"** for our 5 college students (Amanda Allgeier, Becca Allgeier, Maddie Kendall, Mason Oliver, Mia McCartney). There is a plastic bin in the Narthex for your donated items. We are looking for gift cards (coffee, pizza, grub hub, etc.), snacks, de-stress fidget toys (nee-dohs, play-doh, coloring activities, devotions, etc.). We are also hoping you will bring a note/card for each Student which will be included in the Care Package. Please consider bringing an item or two by April 26th. Please see Molly Berry with any questions.

- **Communion to our homebound members** is a blessing for all who participate. **We need to expand our volunteers** for this valuable ministry. It is a once a month visit to two or three members. Please let Minister Claire know if you are interested in joining in.

Holy Cross Prayer Requests

Betty (Emily Buhnerkempe's Grandma), Larry (Emily's Father), Marilyn Black, Elaine Jarvis-Decker, Jan Lawson, Cindy Stricker, Greg Anderson, Vicar Chris Edmonds, Paul, Steve (Stephanie Brown's Father), Sebastian, Mike (Friend of Wayne & Kathy Carter), Derek, Rosemary (Donna Svencner's Mother), Family of Pastor Matt Geerdes, Bob (Pam Musser's Brother), Greg Warren, Terri, Mandi

If you'd like to add someone to the Prayer Request list, please contact Audrey at the HC office.
Prayer requests remain on the list for 3 weeks and can be extended longer at your request.

Holy Cross Announcements

- **HC Confirmation Students** will meet after worship this morning.

- **HC Outreach will continue to collect toilet paper and laundry pods for AMELCA** throughout 2026**.** Please place your donations in the polka dot box in the Narthex at Holy Cross or bring your donations to FELC. A huge **"Thank You"** to Deb Weger, who has been transferring TP & pods each week from HC to FELC. Thanks to everyone that has made a donation. You are supporting our neighbors and this Ministry.

- **WELCA Rummage Sale** details will be announced at a later time.

Upcoming Joint Events & Worship Services

(mark your calendars)

- We will **not** have Joint Worship Service on May 31st, the fifth Sunday in May

- **June 6th is C/SIS Synod Assembly** from 9:00am – 3:00pm via on-line meeting. Voting members can gather together or separately, depending on what your group has decided. HC voting members will meet at HC for the day.

- **July 12th will be Joint Worship Service and Outdoor BBQ/picnic at Holy Cross**

- **Vacation Bible School will be August 3rd – 7th** from 6:00pm – 8:00pm at Holy Cross. It is a little different this year having VBS in the evening, but we are hoping to secure a few more volunteers within that timeframe.

- **August 30th will be Joint Worship Service at FELC**

- September 13th is typically the Sunday to celebrate **"God's Work our Hands".** A specific date has not been determined, but an event will likely be organized around that timeframe.

- **September 19th is the WELCA Fall Gathering** held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Decatur. Last year the event was in Champaign and we had 90 women attend the event; several from FELC and HC attended. With the event being held in Decatur, we hope to see more FELC & HC attendees. The WELCA group will send out additional information this summer.

- **October 4th is the East Central Conference 'Synod Day'**. This is a follow-up to our June 6th C/SIS Synod Assembly. Our C/SIS Synod Office will have a variety of events. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

- **October 31st 'Trunk 'r Treat'** event at Holy Cross. This will be a joint event with FELC and HC.