

**First Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 W. Decatur St.
Decatur, Illinois
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*We have a livestream option on our website!
<https://felcdecatur.org/live>*



**May 17 2026, at 9:30am
Seventh Sunday of Easter
HOLY COMMUNION**

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

INTRODUCTION

In these days between Ascension and Pentecost, we gather with the disciples in the upper room, waiting for the Spirit to transform the church around the world. In today's gospel Jesus prays for his followers and for their mission in his name. Amid religious, social, and economic divisions, we seek the unity that Jesus had with his Father. Made one in baptism, we go forth to live our faith in the world, eager for the unity that God intends for the whole human family.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

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** *“The Head That Once Was Crowned”* **ELW #432**

- 1 The head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now;
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty victor's brow.**
- 2 The highest place that heav'n affords
is his by sov'reign right,
the King of kings, and Lord of lords,
and heav'n's eternal light.**
- 3 The joy of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below
to whom he manifests his love,
and grants his name to know;**
- 4 To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace, is giv'n;
their name, an everlasting name,
their joy, the joy of heav'n.**
- 5 They suffer with their Lord below;
they reign with him above;
their profit and their joy to know
the myst'ry of his love.**
- 6 The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him;
his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme!**

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 of glory, your Son Jesus Christ suffered for us and ascended to your right hand. Unite us with Christ and each other in suffering and in joy, that all the world may be drawn into your bountiful presence, 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: Acts 1:6-14

Today’s reading is part of the introduction to the narrative of the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost. These verses tell of the risen Lord’s conversation with his disciples on the eve of his ascension, in which he promises that they will receive the power of the Holy Spirit.

⁶ When the apostles had come together, they asked Jesus, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. ¹³ When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying: Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ All these were constantly devoting themselves to

prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

- ¹ Let God arise, and let God's enemies be scattered;
let those who hate God flee.
- ² **As smoke is driven away, so you should drive them away;
as the wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.**
- ³ But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God;
let them also be merry and joyful.
- ⁴ **Sing to God, sing praises to God's name; exalt the one who rides the clouds;
I AM is that name, rejoice before God!**
- ⁵ In your holy habitation, O God,
you are a father to orphans, defender of widows;
- ⁶ **you give the solitary a home and bring forth prisoners into freedom;
but the rebels shall live in desert places.**
- ⁷ O God, when you went forth before your people,
when you marched ^l through the wilderness,
- ⁸ **the earth quaked, and the skies poured down rain, at the presence of God, the
God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.**
- ⁹ You sent a bountiful rain, O God;
you restored your inheritance when it languished.
- ¹⁰ **Your people found their home in it;
in your goodness, O God, you have made provision for the poor.**
- ³² Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;
sing praises to the Lord.
- ³³ **You ride in the heavens, O God, in the ancient heavens;
you send forth your voice, your mighty voice.**
- ³⁴ Ascribe power to God,
whose majesty is over Israel; whose strength is in the skies.
- ³⁵ **How wonderful you are in your holy places, O God of Israel,
giving strength and power to your people! Blessed be God!**

Second Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

Our faith in Christ does not make us immune from the scorn of others. Nevertheless, we are to resist the designs of evil when we experience disparagement from others because we trust God's grace will strengthen and guide us.

¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

^{5:6} Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. ⁸ Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. ¹⁰ And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

"Alleluia"

ELW p. 142

P: The holy gospel according to John the 17th Chapter.

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

Gospel: John 17:1-11

On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus prays to his heavenly Father, asking that those who continue his work in this world will live in unity.

¹ After Jesus had spoken these words to his disciples, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶ "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me is from you, ⁸ for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours.

¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ And now I

am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Draw Us in the Spirit’s Tether”

ELW #470

**1 Draw us in the Spirit's tether,
for when humbly in your name
two or three are met together,
you are in the midst of them.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Touch we now your garment's hem.**

**2 As disciples used to gather
in the name of Christ to sup,
then with thanks to God the giver
break the bread and bless the cup,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
so now bind our friendship up.**

**3 All our meals and all our living
make as sacraments of you,
that by caring, helping, giving,
we may be disciples true.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
We will serve with faith anew.**

Text: Percy Dearmer, 1867-1936, alt.

Text from *Songs of Praise* Enlarged Edition © Oxford University Press 1931.

***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: O God, your people sing praises throughout the church. By your Holy Spirit, inspire musicians, deacons, pastors, and bishops to proclaim the gospel of Jesus. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Your creative power fills the universe. Bring favorable weather, nurture plants and animals, protect us from natural disasters, and guide us to care for all you have made. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Your justice is exercised in society by those in authority. Instill in political leaders, business leaders, school administrators, and all who care for others a desire for peace and equity. We pray 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: Your compassion and care come through the gifts of medicine and relationships. Soothe the anxious, protect widows and orphans, comfort those living with memory loss and their families, and heal the sick. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Your love radiates from communities gathered in your name. Bless those experiencing significant transitions in life such as graduation, retirement, new employment, and accompany us in our prayers during these times. Merciful God,
C: receive our prayer.

A: O God, your promise of eternal life is certain and sure. Inspire us by the steadfast faith of those who have gone before us, so that we may be confident in the assurances you give. 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

“I Come with Joy”

ELW #482

(We thank you for your time, talent, and treasure toward ministry at FELC and beyond. Please place your donation in the offering basket at the back of church, or on-line at <https://felcdeatur.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.

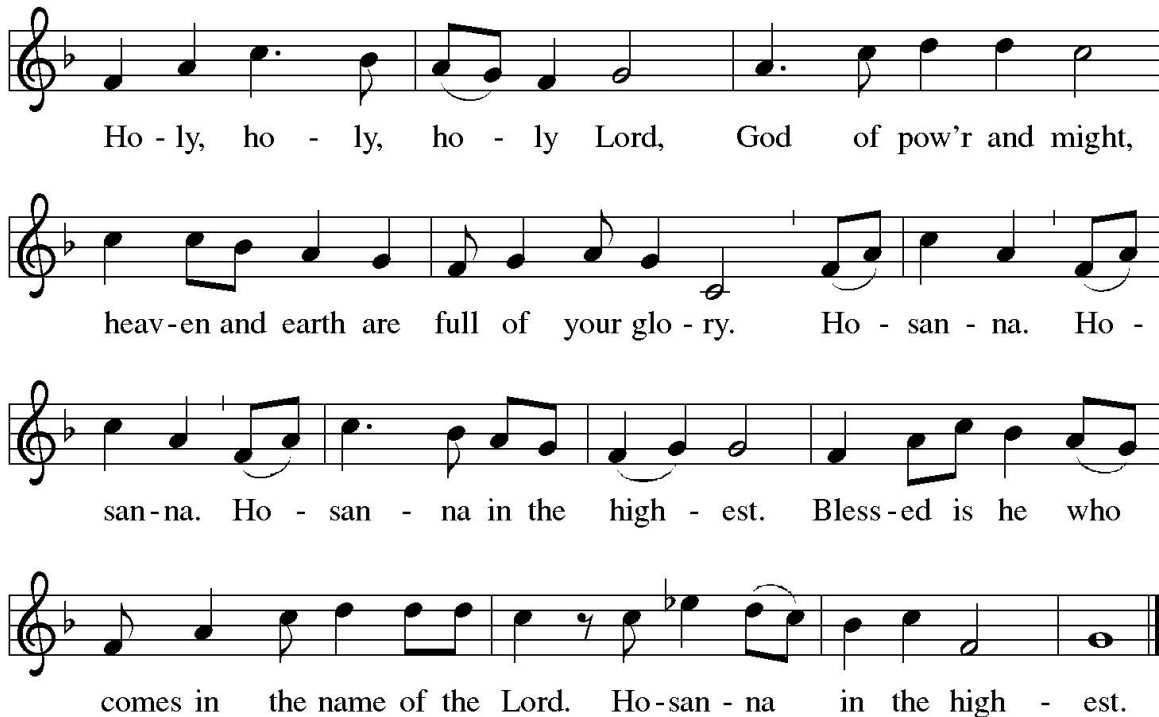
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

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.

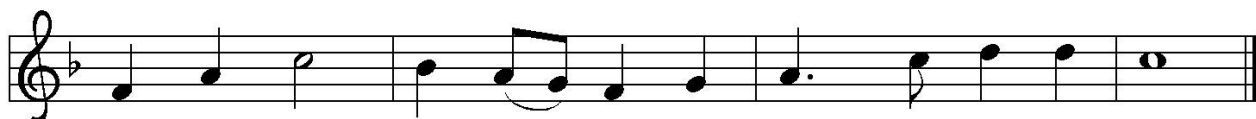
P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for
you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

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



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

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

A - men, a - men, a - men.

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). 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

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

***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**

“Rise, O Sun of Righteousness”

ELW #657

**1 Rise, O Sun of righteousness;
with your might creation bless. Shine upon your church today,
showing all your gentle way. Have mercy, Lord.**

**2 Rouse our hearts from slumber deep;
may your word within us leap. Give us voices to proclaim
praises to your holy name. Have mercy, Lord.**

**3 Gather in your scattered flock;
give us water from the rock. Bless the unity we share
in our shepherd's loving care. Have mercy, Lord.**

**4 Burst the bars of stubborn pride;
make the heav'nly pathway wide. Raise us up from sin and death
with your Spirit's living breath. Have mercy, Lord.**

**5 Honor, praise, and glory be
to the holy Trinity! May your gracious will be done:
make us one, as you are one. Have mercy, Lord.**

***DISMISSAL**

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

C: Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**

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Participants

Presiding and Preaching	Minister Claire Vail
Assisting Minister	Bill Fitzgerrel
Slides	Tami Cannon
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
Greeters	Mike & Karen Reynolds
Check-In	Susan Martin & Marsha Corley
Acolyte	Gemma Berry
Communion Aide	
Money Counters	Jim & Judy Oettel and Gary & Carolyn Likins
Flowers	Allgeier Family in honor of Allie & Becca's Graduation
Indoor Plant Watering	Carolyn Likins

Prayer Requests

Barb Ahlenius, Matt Andrews & Family, Tom Bilyeu, Leon Bolin, Peg Books, Don David Collins, 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 office.
Prayer requests remain on the list for 3 weeks and can be extended longer at your request*

Announcements

- **Book Study** meets on Monday, May 18th at 12:15pm in the Lounge
- **Church Council** meets Monday, May 18th at 6:00pm in the Lounge
- **Art Workshop** meets Thursday, May 21st at 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. This is the final Workshop for the summer. The Workshop will resume on September 17th.
- The Dove Finance Committee meets Thursday, May 21st at 4:00pm in the Lounge
- **Meals on Wheels** volunteers are needed to deliver meals Tuesday, May 26th – Friday, May 29th. Please contact Judy Carney by May 18th if you are available to participate with delivering meals; below is Judy's contact information:
 - Home#: 217-429-0547
 - Cell#: 217-454-3901
 - Email: jcarney329@comcast.net
- The **AMELCA team** served 92 clients on Wednesday, May 13th.
- A message from the Call Committee

We thank all the members of FELC for the unanimous vote to call Pastor Sarah Cordray to be our next pastor. We feel that Pastor Sarah will help us grow in spirit, in mission and in service. Time will go by quickly and soon (before we realize it) Pr. Sarah will become a part of our family. We continue to ask for your prayers as we assist Pr. Sarah and family as they relocate to Decatur. We can all benefit from the words of the Gospel of John in Chapter 14, verse 1: Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. We look forward to Pr. Sarah's arrival in Decatur and her installation as our pastor.
- **Pastor Sarah Cordray** is expected to begin at FELC the week of August 17th. Her Installation is scheduled for Sunday, September 13th.
- **Council has approved for another AA group** to meet at FELC. This second AA group will meet once a week on Thursdays at 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. Our first AA group will continue to meet 7 days a week in the Fellowship Hall.

Upcoming Joint Events & Worship Services

- 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. FELC
- **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.