

Rev. Dr. Sarah Cordray

INSTALLATION SERVICE



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026
9:30 A.M.

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
250 WEST DECATUR STREET
DECATUR, ILLINOIS



September 13, 2026, at 9:30 am

HOLY COMMUNION

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

INTRODUCTION

We rejoice today at the installation of Pastor Sarah as our Pastor and worker with us in ministry here at First Evangelical Lutheran Church. Following the service you are invited to join us in the Fellowship Hall downstairs for a meal and fellowship.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours life into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

C: **Amen.**

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

C: **We confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

**Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

P: Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ,
In whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise
of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

C: **Amen.**

*GATHERING SONG

Here I Am, Lord



1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?"



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946

Music: HERE I AM, LORD, Daniel L. Schutte

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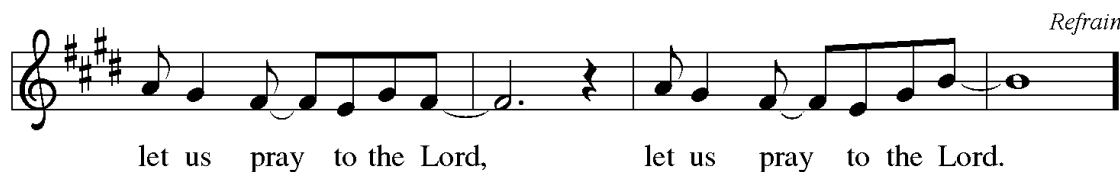
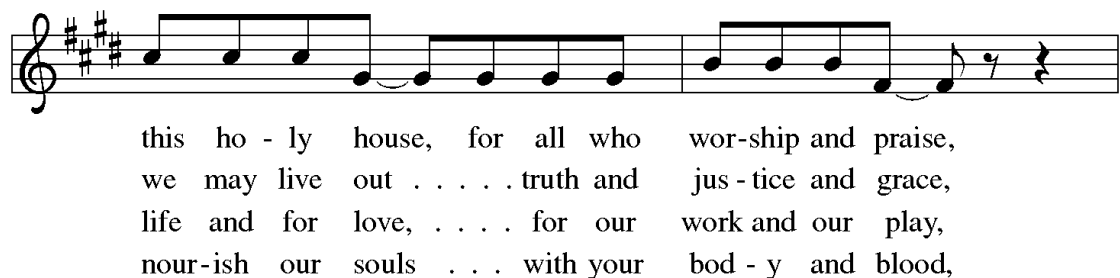
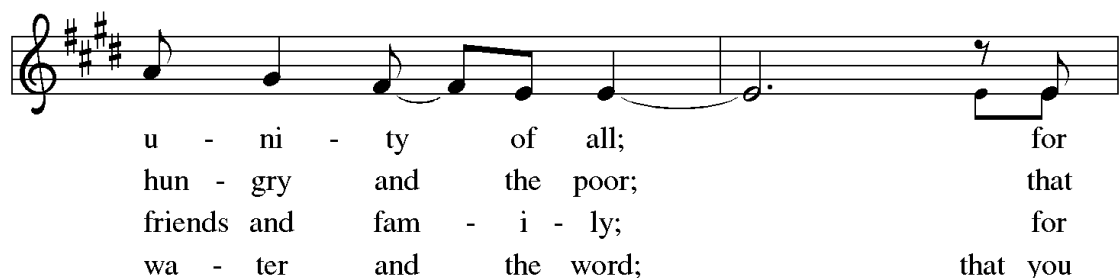
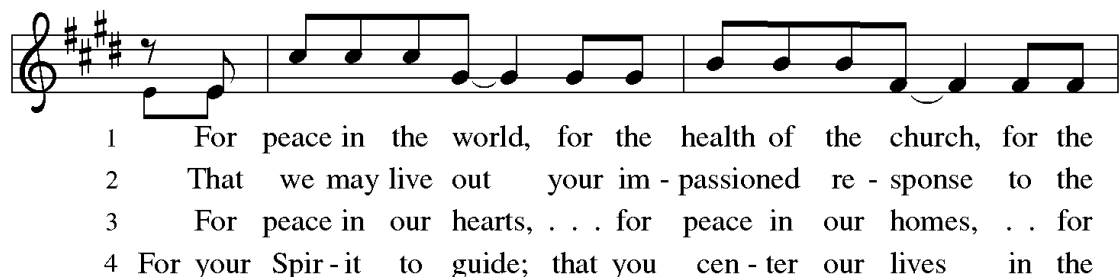
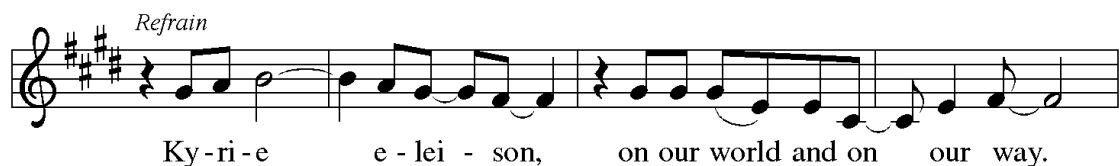
GREETING

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. 184-185



Refrain



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and



peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en - ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you



for your glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high-



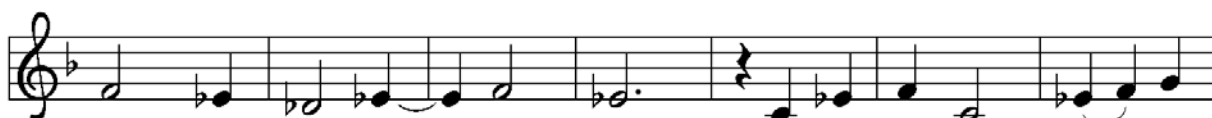
est, the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat-ed at the



right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

Refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and
peace to God's peo - ple on earth. 3 For you a -
lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,
you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the
Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.
A - men. A - men. A - men.

Final refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and peace to God's
peo - ple on earth. Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray,

C: **O Lord, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you have the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

ANTHEM:

“Christ Is the Rock”

Lloyd Larson

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 43:1-7

- ¹ But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name; you are mine.
- ² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you,
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
- ³ For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.
- ⁴ Because you are precious in my sight
and honored and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.
- ⁵ Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;
- ⁶ I will say to the north, “Give them up,”
and to the south, “Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
- ⁷ everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.”

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 139:7-14

⁷ Where can I go from your spirit?

Or where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ **If I ascend to heaven, you are there;**

if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning

and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

¹⁰ **even there your hand shall lead me,**

and your right hand shall hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,

and night wraps itself around me,"

¹² **even the darkness is not dark to you;**

the night is as bright as the day,

for darkness is as light to you.

¹³ For it was you who formed my inward parts;

you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ **I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.**

Wonderful are your works;

that I know very well.

Second Reading: 1 John 4:7-13

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

⁹ God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew the 16th Chapter.

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

Gospel: John 15:1-8

¹ “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ² He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.

³ You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

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

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON: **Cultivating the Future: What Will We Bear?**

*HYMN OF THE DAY

I AM THE VINE

Bob Hurd

Refrain



I am the vine, you are the branch-es. Re-main in me, you shall
be fruit-ful. Love for the world, hope for the hope - less.

Verses



1. If you love, then you must root your - self in me;
2. If you give, then you must give your - self to me;



1. For the branch will fail and die with-out the tree.
2. For the well will soon run dry with-out the sea.

to Refrain

Text based on John 15:1-10. Text and music © 1979, Bob Hurd.
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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

INSTALLATION OF A PASTOR

Installation of a Pastor is appropriately set within the service of Holy Communion, following the sermon and hymn of the day. The Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed may precede the installation rite.

This order is appropriate for installing a pastor who has been previously ordained. The bishop, or a minister of word and sacrament designated by the bishop, normally presides at the installation of a pastor.

Presentation

The assembly stands. The pastor being installed and a representative of the calling body come before the presiding minister and the assembly.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

Having been authorized by the church to install Rev. Dr. Sarah Cordray,
our co-worker in the gospel, as pastor of First Evangelical Lutheran Church.

I now ask for certification of this call.

A representative of the calling body addresses the presiding minister.

After prayerful deliberation,
we, of First Evangelical Lutheran Church,
have called Pastor Sarah to serve as a minister of word and sacrament
in the position of pastor.

I present Rev. Dr. Sarah Cordray and this letter certifying the call.

The representative gives the presiding minister the letter certifying that the call has been received and accepted.

The representative moves aside, and the assembly is seated.

Address and Questions

The presiding minister addresses the minister of word and sacrament.

A reading from John:

Jesus said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

(John 20:21-23)

A reading from Matthew:

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." *(Matthew 28:18-20)*

A reading from First Timothy:

Set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Attend to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers.

(1 Timothy 4:12-16)

The presiding minister addresses questions to the minister of word and sacrament.

Pastor Sarah, in the presence of this assembly
will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility,
in the confidence that it comes from God through the call of the church?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you preach and teach in accordance with the holy scriptures
and with the confessions of the Lutheran church?

Will you carry out this ministry in harmony with the constitutions
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be diligent in your study of the holy scriptures
and faithful in your use of the means of grace?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Trusting in God's care,
will you love, serve, and pray for God's people,
nourish them with the word and sacraments,
and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you give faithful witness in the world,
that God's love may be known in all that you do?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things,
graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

The assembly responds: Amen.

The assembly stands.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

People of God,
will you receive Pastor Sarah as a messenger of Jesus Christ
sent to serve all people with the gospel of hope and salvation?
Will you regard Pastor Sarah as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

Will you pray for Pastor Sarah?
Will you help and honor Pastor Sarah in carrying out this ministry?
In all things, will you strive to live together in the peace and unity of Christ?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

The presiding minister addresses the minister of word and sacrament.

Pastor Sarah the office of pastor of First Evangelical Lutheran Church is now committed to you
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Blessing

The newly installed pastor may kneel as the presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,
make you complete in everything good so that you may do God's will,
working in you that which is pleasing in God's sight;
through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

Amen.

The pastor stands. The following procession to the places of the word and sacraments may be used.

The presiding minister escorts the pastor to the place of baptism.

A representative of the congregation says:

You have been called to be among us to baptize, to teach, and to forgive sins.

They proceed to the place of the word.

A representative of the congregation says:

You have been called to be among us to proclaim the good news.

They proceed to the place of the meal.

A representative of the congregation says:

You have been called to be among us to preside at the Lord's supper.

The presiding minister may address the assembly with these or similar words.

People of God, I present to you Rev. Dr. Sarah Cordray, your pastor.

Let us welcome Pastor Sarah in the name of Christ.

The assembly may offer acclamation with applause.

The service continues with the prayers of intercession. Prayers are included for the newly installed pastor, all ministries in the church, and all Christians in their vocations.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

A: Lord, we pray that our new pastor will daily abide in You, keeping Your words deep within her heart, so that her ministry always flows from a vibrant, personal relationship with Jesus. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Grant Pastor Sarah and the leadership of First Lutheran the wisdom and energy to lead and care for our congregation, that together our labor may produce lasting spiritual and tangible fruit in our lives, community, and world. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Fill Pastor Sarah, all pastors, deacons and SAMS, and Bishop Busboom and synod staff with Your perfect love, so that they may guide their flocks with patience, and experience the full, overflowing joy of serving You . Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Father, convict us to love one another and our neighbors just as You have loved us, laying down our own preferences so that we may serve all your people and creation as we follow your mission for First Lutheran. Make us bold as your disciples to pray constantly, serve joyfully, and tell the story of Christ. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray that our collective prayers for this new season will align with Your will as we frame our life together in your grace and love, and we thank You in advance for how You will answer our prayers, especially for those most in need--the sick, the lonely, the grieving, and the least of us in this community and world. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Teach us what it means to live out greater love by laying down our lives, time, and resources for our neighbors, just as Christ did for us. We thank you for the witnesses of this congregation who now rest eternally with you. May their faith journeys continue to inspire us. Merciful God,
C: receive our prayer.

A: May the unity between our new pastor and this congregation show the world that we are Your disciples, bringing glory to Your name. Merciful God,
C: receive our prayer.

P: Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
C: Amen.

***PEACE**

MEAL

OFFERING

(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://felcdecatur.org/give>, or by mail.)

ANTHEM: *“Let Us Walk in God’s Light”* **Sherry Blevins**

(This SAB version was commissioned in celebration of the installation of Rev. Dr. Sarah Cordray at First Evangelical Church in Decatur, Illinois and their continuing mission to serve God joyfully)

OFFERING PRAYER

P: God of creation,

C: you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.

All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have.

Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. 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.
Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection,
you pour out the fire of your Spirit,
uniting in one body people of ev'ry nation and tongue.
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. 190

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.
Pour out your spirit on us, O Lord...

C: Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

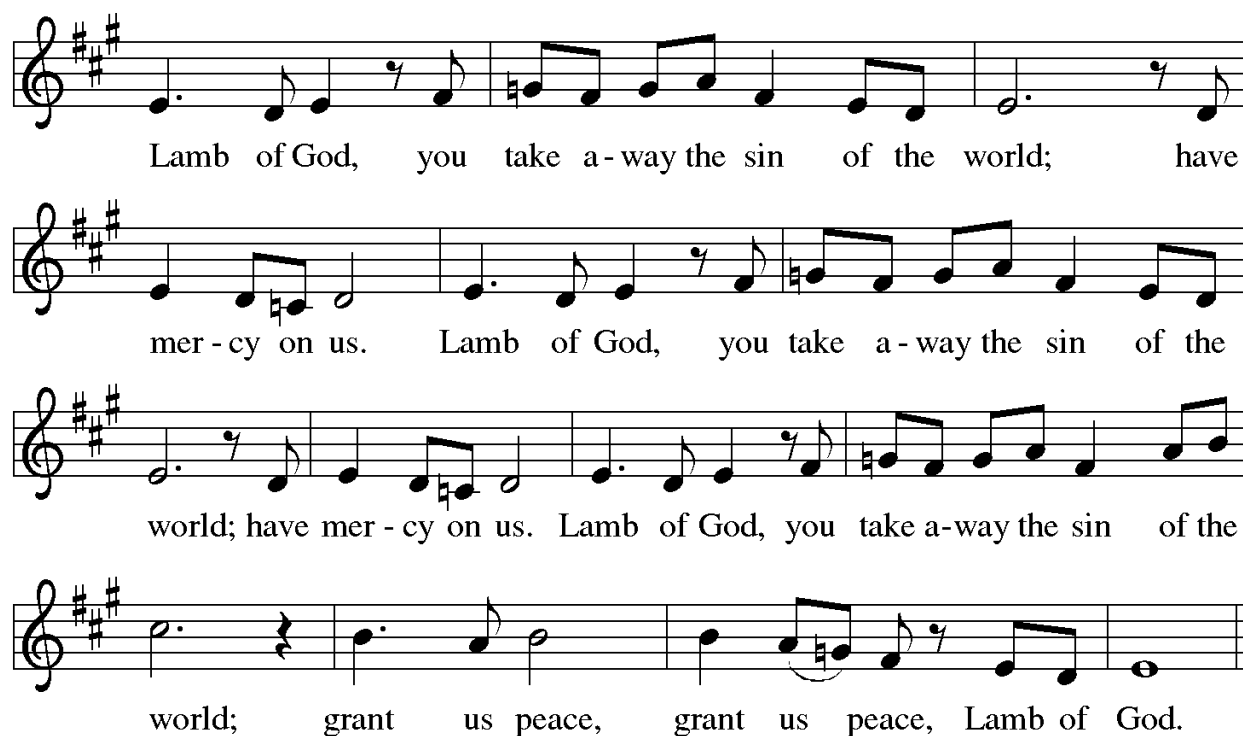
ELW p. 191

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

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.



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, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

CHOIR

“Fruit of the Vine”

Mark Patterson

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Compassionate God,

C: through the gifts of bread and wine**our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love.****Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal,****may share your love freely, as you have shared with us.****We ask this in the name of Jesus,****through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING***BLESSING**

P: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,

✠ one God, bless, heal, and hold you
today and always.**C: Amen.**

*SENDING SONG

The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve

1 The Spir - it sends us forth to serve; we go in
2 We go to com - fort those who mourn and set the
3 We go to be the hands of Christ, to scat - ter
4 Then let us go to serve in peace, the gos - pel

Je - sus' name to bring glad tid - ings
bur - dened free; where hope is dim, - to
joy to like seed and, all our days, to
to pro - claim. God's Spir - it has em -

to the poor, God's fa - vor to pro - claim.
share a dream and help the blind to see.
cher - ish life, to do the lov - ing deed.
pow - ered us; we go in Je - sus' name.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

Music: CHESTERFIELD, attr. Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

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***DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace praying constantly, serving joyfully, and telling the story of Christ!

C: **Thanks be to God.**

***POSTLUDE**

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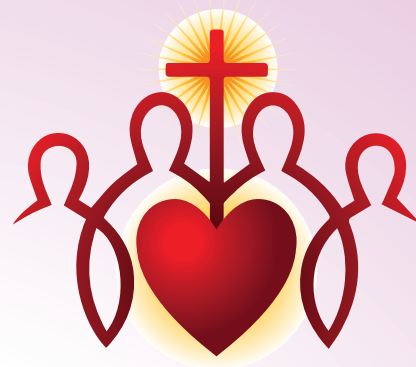
Participants

- Presiding and PreachingCentral/Southern Illinois Synod Bishop Greg G. Busboom
- Assisting MinisterMarty Brilley
- SlidesBill Fitzgerald
- Organist/Bell Choir DirectorRick Strine
- Choir DirectorMilton Scott
- FlutistColleen Hillyer-Pacey
- Technical DirectorLucas Reynolds
- Audio/VisualAbbey Jordan & Audio/Visual Team
- Bell RingerMike Reynolds
- GreetersMike and Karen Reynolds
- Check-InBob and Carol Tyler
- AcolyteEnsley Dalen
- Communion AideSheryl Brilley
- Money CountersJim and Judy Oettel/Gary and Carolyn Likins
- Indoor Plant WateringGail Rotz
- FlowersMary Jo Rowley (in honor of parent’s anniversary)
- SonRise CaféMeal catered by Olive Garden

Please Welcome Pastor Sarah Cordray and her family today.
Everyone is welcome to join us in the Fellowship Hall for SonRise Café this morning!

Called to Serve

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
250 WEST DECATUR STREET
DECATUR, ILLINOIS



GRIEF GROUP SUPPORT

Meets Mondays from 11:00 - 12:30



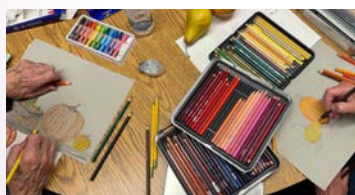
AMELCA

Food Pantry distributes food to needy
Wednesdays 10:00 - 12:00



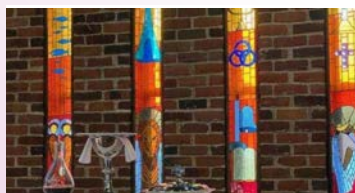
QUILTING

Makes quilts for Lutheran World Relief
Meets Thursdays 9:00 - 11:15



ART WORKSHOP

Meets Third Thursday of each Month
Meets 1:00 - 2:00



WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays 9:30



ADULT FORMATION CLASSES

Meets Sundays 10:30-11:15