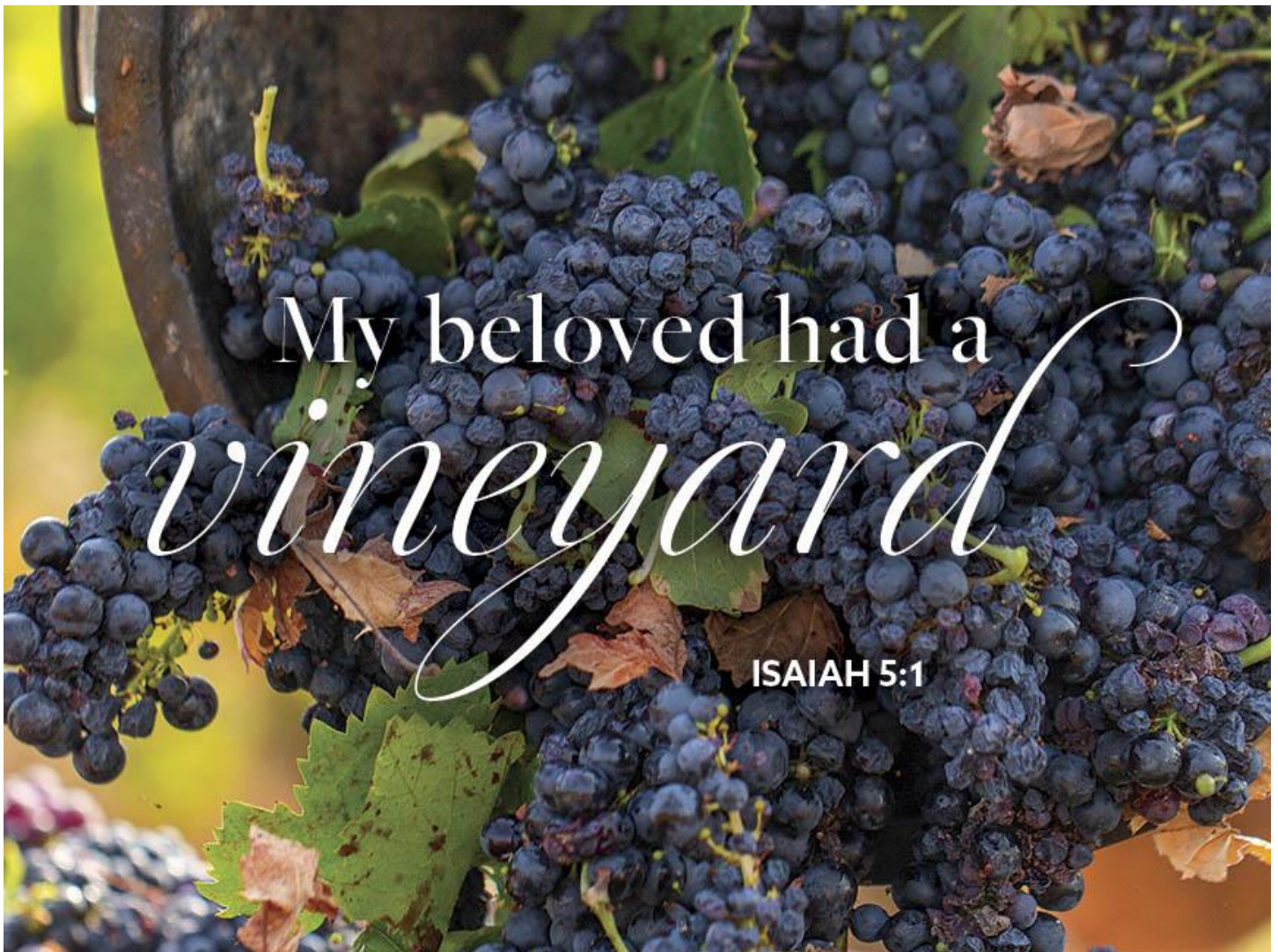


**First Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 W. Decatur St.
Decatur, Illinois
(217) 423-7783**

**Website: www.felcdecatur.org
Email: felc_decatur@outlook.com**

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



My beloved had a
vineyard

ISAIAH 5:1

**October 4, 2026, at 9:30am
HOLY COMMUNION**

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

INTRODUCTION

Most often, a surprise is a wonderful event or experience, BUT not in today's gospel. All along, the religious leaders thought that they were the one's receiving God's righteousness as they carefully followed all 613 laws and monitored others as well. They thought the fruit of righteousness which they were producing was good. That is until, they are surprised to hear others will receive the kingdom of God rather than them because these "others" are bearing fruit of God's kingdom. Bishop Greg shared with us that we are to be Apple Trees bearing good fruit even against the backdrop of a dilapidated homestead and farmland of the decay of our world around us. Because Christ is killed and raised from the dead, the fruit we bear continues to grow in places least expected given to surprising receivers!

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 love 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**

“My Lord of Light ”

ELW #832

- 1 My Lord of light who made the worlds,
in wisdom you have spoken;
but those who heard your wise commands
your holy law have broken.**
- 2 My Lord of love who knew no sin,
a sinner's death enduring:
for us you wore a crown of thorns,
a crown of life securing.**
- 3 My Lord of life who came in fire
when Christ was high ascended:
your burning love is now released,
our days of fear are ended.**
- 4 My Lord of lords, one Trinity,
to your pure name be given
all glory now and evermore,
all praise in earth and heaven.**

Text: Christopher Idle, b. 1938

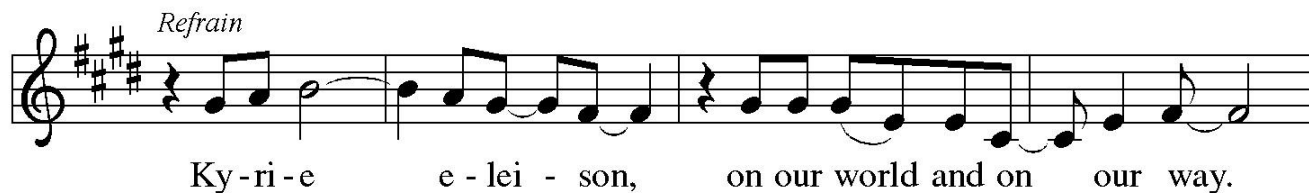
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GREETING

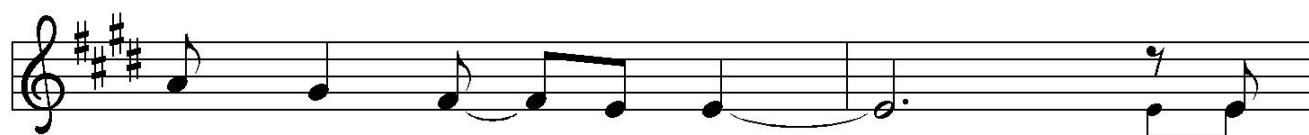
ELW p. 184

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.



- 1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
 2 That we may live out your im-passioned re-sponse to the
 3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
 4 For your Spir-it to guide; that you cen-ter our lives in the



u-ni-ty of all; for
 hun-gry and the poor; that
 friends and fam-i-ly; for
 wa-ter and the word; that you



this ho-ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
 we may live out truth and jus-tice and grace,
 life and for love, for our work and our play,
 nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod-y and blood,



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

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

Refrain
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.

***HYMN OF PRAISE** (*continued*) “Glory to God in the Highest” ELW p. 185-186

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: Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "wild grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

¹ I will sing for my beloved
my love song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

² He dug it and cleared it of stones
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded rotten grapes.

³ And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.

⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield rotten grapes?

⁵ And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.
I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.

⁶ I will make it a wasteland;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.
⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are his cherished garden;
he expected justice
but saw bloodshed;
righteousness
but heard a cry!

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80:7-15

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
⁸ **You have brought a vine out of Egypt;
you cast out the nations and planted it.**
⁹ You cleared the ground for it;
it took root and filled the land.
¹⁰ **The mountains were covered by its shadow
and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.**
¹¹ You stretched out its tendrils to the sea
and its branches to the river.
¹² **Why have you broken down its wall,
so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?**
¹³ The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it,
and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.
¹⁴ **Turn now, O God of hosts,
look down from heaven;**
¹⁵ behold and tend this vine;
preserve what your right hand has planted.

ANTHEM

“A Hymn Tapestry”

John Purifoy

Second Reading: Philippians 3:4b-14

Paul reviews some of his supposed credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

[Paul writes:] ^{4b} If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith.

¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

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 21st Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-46

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

[Jesus said:] ³³ "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. ³⁴ When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Then he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' ³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" ⁴¹ They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;

this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes'?

⁴³ “Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. ⁴⁴ The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON - “Surprising Receivers”

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *“Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth”* **ELW #727**

- 1 Lord Christ, when first you came to earth,
upon a cross they bound you,
and mocked your saving kingship's worth
by thorns with which they crowned you.
And still our wrongs may fashion now
new thorns to pierce that steady brow,
and robe of sorrow round you.**
- 2 O awesome Love, which finds no room
in life where sin denies you,
and, doomed to death, shall bring to doom
the pow'r that crucifies you,
till not a stone is left on stone,
and then the nations' pride, o'erthrown,
will nevermore defy you!**
- 3 New advent of the love of Christ,
will we again refuse you,
till in the night of hate and war
we perish as we lose you?
From ancient doubts our minds release
to seek the kingdom of your peace,
by which alone we choose you.**

**4 O wounded hands of Jesus, build
in us your new creation;
our pride is dust, our vaunt is stilled;
we wait your revelation.
O Love that triumphs over loss,
we bring our hearts before your cross;
come, finish your salvation.**

Text: W. Russell Bowie, 1882-1969, alt.

***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: Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

P: God, we praise you Lord Hear us O God,

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of every generation, we give thanks for all who have sought to renew and transform your holy church. Inspire us to follow their example in our own day. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of every creature, bless and protect the earth and all those who dwell within it. We give thanks for those who have helped us to see your Spirit in creation. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of every tribe and nation, restore peace to the world's conflict zones, and shelter those who live within them. We pray especially for the safety of displaced people and refugees. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of every comfort, you made us in your own image. Grant healing and relief to all who are sick or suffering. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of every truth, you draw us nearer to you through your holy word. We give thanks for teachers of the faith. Fill their hearts with your Spirit, that they inspire others with your truth. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of every soul, you are the one who calls us home. We give thanks for all the saints who have been restored to perfect unity with you. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through 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.)

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 upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord...

C: Amen

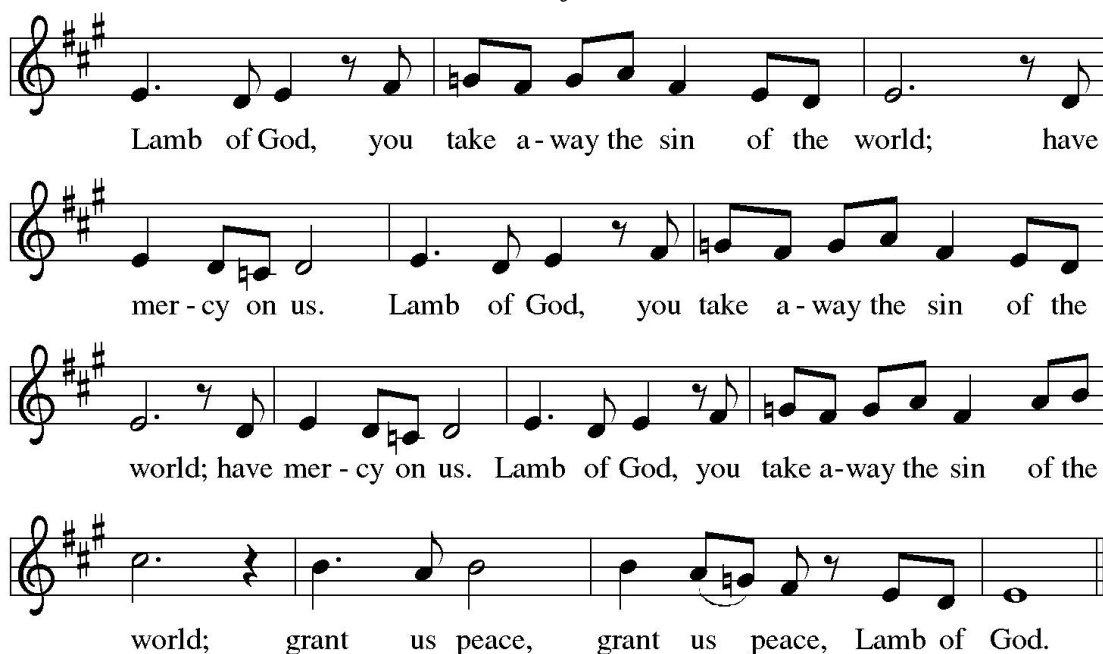
LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p. 191

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

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.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Sustaining God,

C: with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.

By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.

Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,

following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

***EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

P: In the name of God:

C: 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS**SENDING*****BLESSING**

P: The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus.

C: Amen.

P: The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: The God of grace ✝ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

***SENDING HYMN**

“Thine the Amen”

ELW #826

**1 Thine the amen thine the praise
alleluias angels raise
thine the everlasting head
thine the breaking of the bread
thine the glory thine the story
thine the harvest then the cup
thine the vineyard then the cup
is lifted up lifted up.**

**2 Thine the life eternally
thine the promise let there be
thine the vision thine the tree
all the earth on bended knee
gone the nailing gone the railing
gone the pleading gone the cry
gone the sighing gone the dying
what was loss lifted high.**

**3 Thine the truly thine the yes
thine the table we the guest
thine the mercy all from thee
thine the glory yet to be
then the ringing and the singing
then the end of all the war
thine the living thine the loving
evermore evermore.**

**4 Thine the kingdom thine the prize
thine the wonder full surprise
thine the banquet then the praise
then the justice of thy ways
thine the glory thine the story
then the welcome to the least
then the wonder all increasing
at thy feast at thy feast.**

**5 Thine the glory in the night
no more dying only light
thine the river thine the tree
then the Lamb eternally
then the holy holy holy
celebration jubilee
thine the splendor thine the brightness
only thee only thee.**

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926
Text © 1983 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

***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 Preaching
Assisting Minister
Slides
Organist/Bell Choir Director
Choir Director
Technical Director
Audio/Visual
Bell Ringer
Greeter
Check-In
Acolyte
Communion Aide
Money Counters
Indoor Plant Watering

Rev. Dr. Sarah Cordray
Bob Tyler
Ruth Nihiser
Rick Strine
Milton Scott
Lucas Reynolds
Abbey Jordan & Audio/Visual Team
Steve Wenger
Tami & Bruce Cannon
Ruth Nihiser & Marsha Thornhill
Gemma Berry
Sheryl Brilley
Gary Beck, Larry Haab, & Sheryl Brilley
Carol Broeking

Prayer Requests

Matt Andrews & Family, Peg Books, Mary Broomfield, Tonya Deberry, Bill Fitzgerrel, Scott Geiger, David Goldsborough, Esther Gregory, Janice Isaacs, Jan Lawson, Marilyn Oftedal, Dale Pelz (Brother of Nancy Salefski), Bill Voss, Sebastian (Bass) Smallwood, Mary Ann & Ken Stolley, Rick Strine

*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.*

Upcoming Joint Events & Worship Services

- **Thursday, October 29th** **"TRUNK 'R TREAT"** event from 5:00pm-7:00pm in the parking lot at First United Methodist Church, 201 W. North St. Rather than putting on the event with only Holy Cross, we have decided to join forces with other churches and organizations in the area. **We need volunteers from both FELC and HC.** So many creative things can be displayed and things handed out to the kids. Partner with another member or family and together come up with a theme for decorating the trunk of your car. Some suggestions for handouts are Christian coloring books, pens or pencils with our church name & address, glow sticks and much more – and we cannot skimp out on the candy!! That's the main event!! **Please consider donating candy &/or a small toy.** A plastic bin is in the Narthex for your donations. This is going to be so much fun and it provides for a safe trick or treat experience!! Please sign-up on the **"TRUNK 'R TREAT"** sheet in the Narthex. **Everyone is invited to participate!!!**
- **Sunday, November 29th** is **joint Worship Service** at Holy Cross. Worship service will begin at 9:30am and there will be fellowship following Worship. All are welcome!!!

FELC Announcements

- **Synod Day for our East Central Conference** is this afternoon at Grace Lutheran Church, 313 S. Prospect Ave., Champaign from 2:00pm-7:00pm. Hope to see you there!!
- **Adult Faith Formation** has started meeting again after Sunday Worship Service in the Lounge. Thank you, Terry Shields, for leading this group. All Are Welcome!!
- The **AMELCA** Team served 132 clients on Wednesday, September 30th. Please give generously today for "First Fruits Sunday".

- Tuesday, October 6th at 7:00pm is **Dove's Annual Candlelight Service** that will be held here at FELC in the sanctuary.
- **FELC New Member Class** is Wednesday, October 7th from 5:00pm-7:00pm in the Lounge. Please contact Pastor Sarah with any questions.
- **Meet, Eat & Greet** is **Thursday, October 8th** at 12:00pm. The entrée this month is fried chicken. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. **ALL ARE WELCOME!!**
- **Finance Committee** will meet on Thursday, October 8th at 4:00pm via Zoom.
- There will be a **Congregation Forum with SonRise Café potluck on Sunday, October 11th** after Worship Service in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a brunch item to share as we discuss important FELC topics. Contact Mary Jo Rowley if you would like more information about the potluck.
- **Mission Spending Plan outlines for 2027** have been emailed to the various committees. Please return your 2027 MSP to Molly Berry by October 12th.
- **Blessing of the Quilts** will be on **Sunday, October 18th**. Please come to church a little early and walk around the sanctuary to view all of the beautiful quilts our quilters have created. We will also collect the **Noisy Offering** during worship, to offset the cost of shipping. We accept both noisy and soft offerings!!
- **Harvest Fest Potluck** is **November 8th** after Worship Service in the fellowship hall. Please bring a brunch item to share as we celebrate the Autumn season. Contact Nancy Salefski or Mary Jo Rowley for more information.
- **Our Grief Group** will resume meeting January 11th, 2027. This group meets every other Monday from 11:00am-12:30pm in the Lounge.



TRUNK 'R TREAT

October 29th 5:00pm-7:00pm
at First United Methodist Church
201 W. North St.

Sign-up to decorate your trunk
and/or pass out candy.