



"Unbind him and let him go" John 11:44

Fifth Weekend in Lent

March 21, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

March 22, 2026 at 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.

First Lutheran Church
Decorah, IA

WELCOME TO FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Whatever your country of origin or ancestry, your race or ethnic heritage, and whether you are religious or not, Christian or not, or Lutheran or not, you are welcome here.

Whether you are male, female or transgender, young or old, straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual, you are welcome here.

Whether you are single or partnered, married, widowed or divorced, you are welcome here.

Whether you are wealthy or poor, own a home or rent, live at home or are homeless, you are welcome here.

Whatever your political views - whether to the right, to the left or to the center, you are welcome here.

Whatever your strengths or weaknesses, gifts or challenges, they will be honored, for you are welcome here.

First Lutheran Church is committed to being a loving and welcoming community centered in the Good News of Jesus Christ. In faithfulness to the Christian Gospel, in reflection of our Lutheran emphasis on grace, and in celebration of our shared baptismal journey, we promise to enter into ministry with all who seek God here.

We invite you to join us for worship and take up your place with us in ministry for you are welcome at First Lutheran Church.

NOTES ABOUT WORSHIP:

This **bulletin** contains the prayers, readings, some music, and responses that you will need to participate in worship.

Hymnals can be found in the pews for most congregational songs. We use both the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) and purple All Creation Sings (ACS) hymnals.

The **communion meal** is open to all who desire to participate, of any age. Gluten-free wafers and juice are available. Individual communion kits are also available as you enter the worship space for those who wish to remain in the pews.

Children are welcome at all of our worship services. A play area, where you'll also find quiet bags, is available for families in sanctuary. Feel free to nurse or feed your child in the sanctuary. We also have a staffed nursery during Sunday worship. Ask an usher for directions or follow the signs out the door at the northeast corner of the sanctuary.

Are you visiting? We invite you to fill out a yellow connection card found in your pew. Please also introduce yourself to Pr. Mike and Pr. David on your way out! Consider yourself welcome and invited to participate in the activities and worship life of this congregation!

TODAY'S THEME *Jesus so loves the world that he enters our grief, weeps with us, and calls us out of death into life.*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE 5:00 p.m. - Come, All Christians, Be Committed - The Sacred Harp/
Mark Hayes

8:15 a.m. - Pari Intervallo - Arvo Pärt

***GATHERING SONG** Open the Eyes Of My Heart - Paul Baloche (*see purple insert*)
10:30 a.m. only I'll Do My Best (*see purple insert*)

WELCOME *Everyone is invited to share their prayer requests on the yellow cards found in the pews. If you are new to worship, please also include your contact information.*

***GATHERING HYMN** 8:15 a.m. only - ELW 886 Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

***KYRIE**

Refrain



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.



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,



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

***GREETING** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY** *After we pause to breathe and for personal prayer, the presiding minister will pray.*

God of all consolation and compassion, your Son comforted the grieving sisters, Martha and Mary; your breath alone brings life to dry bones and weary souls. Pour out your Spirit upon us, that we may face despair and death with the hope of resurrection and faith in the One who called Lazarus forth from the grave. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching, and song.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE *Sunday only*

PSALM Psalm 130

¹ Out of the depths

I cry to you, O LORD;

² O LORD, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

³ If you were to keep watch over sins,

O LORD, who could stand?

⁴ Yet with you is forgiveness,

in order that you may be revered.

⁵ I wait for you, O LORD; my soul waits;

in your word is my hope.

⁶ My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch

for the morning,

more than those who keep watch for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is steadfast

love;

with the LORD there is plenteous redemption.

⁸ For the LORD shall redeem Israel

from all their sins.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *During Lent we will remain seated for the acclamation and reading of the gospel.*



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.



Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

* Please rise in body or spirit.

GOSPEL CONVERSATION

Martha and Mary bring their grief honestly to Jesus. At two points in the reading, the congregation will read Martha and Mary's words in bold.

John 11:1–46

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

A certain man, Lazarus, was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, "Lord, the one whom you love is ill."

Jesus: This illness isn't fatal. It's for the glory of God so that God's Son can be glorified through it.

Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was. After two days, he said to his disciples:

Jesus: Let's return to Judea again.

The Disciples: Rabbi, the Jewish opposition wants to stone you, but you want to go back?

Jesus: Aren't there twelve hours in the day? Whoever walks in the day doesn't stumble because they see the light of the world. But whoever walks in the night does stumble because the light isn't in them.

Our friend Lazarus is sleeping, but I am going in order to wake him up.

The Disciples: Lord, if he's sleeping, he will get well.

They thought Jesus meant that Lazarus was in a deep sleep, but Jesus had spoken about Lazarus' death.

Jesus: Lazarus has died. For your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there so that you can believe. Let's go to him.

Then Thomas (the one called the Twin) said to the other disciples:

Thomas: Let us go too so that we may die with Jesus.

Jesus arrives in Bethany.

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Bethany was a little less than two miles from Jerusalem. Many of the Jewish neighbors had come to comfort Martha and Mary after their brother's death. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, while Mary remained in the house. Martha said to Jesus:

Martha (all): Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died.

Martha: Even now I know that whatever you ask God, God will give you.

Jesus: Your brother will rise again.

Martha: I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.

Jesus: I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?

Martha: Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, God's Son, the one who is coming into the world.

After she said this, Martha went and spoke privately to her sister Mary: "The teacher is here and he's calling for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Jesus. He hadn't entered the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the neighbors who were comforting Mary in the house saw her get up quickly and leave, they followed her. They assumed she was going to mourn at the tomb.

When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said:

Mary (all): Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died.

When Jesus saw her crying and the Jewish neighbors who had come with her crying also, he was deeply disturbed and troubled.

Jesus: Where have you laid him?

Neighbors: Lord, come and see.

Jesus began to cry.

Neighbors: See how much he loved him!

Neighbors: He healed the eyes of the man born blind. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?

Jesus comes to the tomb. It is a cave, and a stone covers the entrance.

Jesus was deeply disturbed again when he came to the tomb.

Jesus: Remove the stone.

Martha: Lord, the smell will be awful! He's been dead four days.

Jesus: Didn't I tell you that if you believe, you will see God's glory?

So they removed the stone. Jesus looked up and said:

Jesus: Father, thank you for hearing me. I know you always hear me. I say this for the benefit of the crowd standing here so that they will believe that you sent me.

Having said this, Jesus shouted with a loud voice:

Jesus: Lazarus, come out!

The dead man came out, his feet bound and his hands tied, and his face covered with a cloth. Jesus said to them:

Jesus: Unbind him and let him go.

Many of the Jewish neighbors who came with Mary and saw what Jesus did believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

SERMON Pr. Mike Wilker

What are you crying out to God about these days — and who is someone you could share that with? Who around you is grieving — and what would it mean to simply sit with them and listen?

***HYMN OF THE DAY** ELW 712 Lord Whose Love in Humble Service

***APOSTLES' CREED** 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 power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
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**

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. Let us pray in Jesus' name for the church, the human family, and all the world. After each dialogue we will pause for silent prayer.

A brief silence.

For all people in their daily life and work; **For our families, friends and neighbors, and for those who are alone.**

Silent prayer

For this community, the nation and the world;

For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

Silent prayer

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

Silent prayer

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble; **For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

Silent prayer

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

Silent prayer

For those on our prayer list . . .and for all our special needs and concerns, both the prayers of our hearts and those we now say aloud. . .

Hear us, Lord; **For your mercy is great.**

Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

***PEACE** The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prayers, announcements, and updates can be found in the weekly AfterWord. To view the AfterWord or to subscribe online, visit firstlutherandecorah.org/afterword or scan the QR code to the left.



MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Christ.

OFFERING

Give online at firstlutherandecorah.org/give,
text "GIVE" to (563) 412-2243,
or scan the QR code.

5:00 p.m. - What Wondrous Love Is This - Southern Harmony/Lloyd Larson
8:15 a.m. - Aria from Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust, BWV 170 - J.S. Bach
10:30 a.m. - ELW 807 Come Thou Fount



***OFFERING PRAYER**

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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. In these forty days, you bring us back to your generous heart through prayer, fasting, and acts of loving-kindness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

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.

* Please rise in body or spirit.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE
TABLE WITH WORDS
OF INSTITUTION**

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide, together with rivers and seas, wells and springs we bless and magnify you. You led your people Israel through the desert, and provided them water from the rock.

We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water, who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.

In the night in which he was arrested, 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, Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.

Pour out your Spirit on this holy food and on all the people gathered for this feast: wash away our sin, that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.

We praise you, O God, blessed and Holy Trinity, now and forever.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Make us bold, merciful God, to pray as Jesus taught.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

***INVITATION TO
COMMUNION**

We believe Jesus Christ is present when we share this meal. Here God nourishes our faith, forgives our sin, and calls us to share God's love. Adults and children of any age are welcome to receive communion.

COMMUNION MUSIC

5:00 p.m. - Improvisation on "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need"
- Joseph Martin

8:15 a.m. - ELW 353 Were You There (v. 1 & 5) &
ELW 614 There is a Balm in Gilead

10:30 a.m. - How Deep the Father's Love For Us - Stuart Townend
Only by Our Lonesome - Nate Cray
(see purple insert for both)

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have revived us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in love to serve.

***BLESSING** The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The LORD look upon you with favor and + give you peace. **Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN** 5:00 p.m. & 8:15 a.m. - ACS 1024 Here on Jesus Christ I Will Stand
10:30 a.m. - Amazing Grace - Eagles style (*see purple insert*)

***DISMISSAL** Go in peace. Love your neighbor. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE 5:00 p.m. - Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing - Carl Gläser/Larry Shackley
8:15 a.m. - Passacaglia in d - Dieterich Buxtehude

** Please rise in body or spirit.*

5:00 P.M. WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

Pr. Mike Wilker, preaching & presiding minister
Jon Thompson, reader, communion assistant,
& worship welcome team
Mike Ellingsen, piano

8:15 A.M. WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

Pr. Mike Wilker, preaching minister
Pr. David Severtson, presiding minister
Myrv Christopherson, assisting minister
Vicky Jaeger, reader & communion assistant
Alex Mesler, organ
Deborah Gover
Jake Nimrod, stream team
Clarence Nimrod, stream team
Kara Franke, nursery
Kevin & Kris Quandahl, worship welcome team
Don & Susan Nelson, worship welcome team

10:30 A.M. WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

Pr. Mike Wilker, preaching minister
Pr. David Severtson, presiding minister
Pat Seckar, assisting minister
Betsy Ratashak-Vogel & Marta Vogel, reader
Simon Vogel, communion assistant
Mark Potvin, lead musician
Kara Franke, nursery
Pat Secker, worship welcome team
Brian Erickson, worship welcome team
Jeff & Donita Joens, worship welcome team
Brian Foust & Eric Winters, worship welcome team

