



"Go and work in the vineyard today" Matthew 21:28

18th Weekend after Pentecost

September 26, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

September 27, 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. Children & youth, be sure to pick-up a **children's bulletin** where you'll find activities & more related to today's worship.

Hymnals can be found in the pews for most congregational songs - 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 NE corner of the sanctuary.

An induction **hearing loop system** is available throughout the sanctuary. Sound is broadcast directly from our audio system into your personal hearing device, significantly reducing background noise and echo. How to connect: Switch your hearing aid or cochlear implant to the "T" (Telecoil) or "loop" setting.

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!

GATHERING

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

PRELUDE 5:00 p.m. - Praise His Greatness - Mark Hayes
8:15 a.m. - Partita on "Simple Gifts" - N. Goemanne
10:30 a.m. - W&P 53 Great is the Lord (see yellow 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. - ELW 526 God Is Here!
10:30 a.m. - I'll Do My Best (see yellow insert)

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

10:30am omit

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives and frees us from 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 lament the harm done by those who came before us: the taking of land, the breaking of families, the silencing of language and faith, done in the name of Jesus Christ. We confess that we still benefit from it and have not, in our own day, consistently repented or sought repair. 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**

"Kyrie eleison" means Lord, have mercy. It's one of our most basic prayers. At the beginning of worship we pray that God's mercy fills us and the whole world.

Leader

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Assembly

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have

For the reign of God, and for

mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peace through - out the world, for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord.

For your

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peo - ple here who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your

word, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have

Help, save, and de - fend us, O God.

mer - cy. A - men.

* Please rise in body or spirit.

*NOW THE FEAST

This is our autumn Hymn of Praise. The words are from Isaiah 25 and Revelation 5. The music is by Marty Haugen.

Refrain



Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion, all of cre - a - tion



sings for joy to the God of life and love and free-dom;



praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!



1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain, whose blood has



freed and u - nit-ed us to be one great peo-ple of God.



2 Pow - er and rich-es, wis-dom and might, all hon - or and



glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er.



3 For God has come to dwell with us, to make us peo-ple of



God; to make all things new.

*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 our salvation, we falter before the demands of your word and turn away from your call to life. Pour out your mercy on us as you showed mercy to your people of old, that we may turn from our sinfulness and walk the path of self-emptying love made known in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

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

BLESSING OF BIBLES & READERS

Sunday only

FIRST READING

Exodus 17:1-7

Because the thirsty Israelites quarreled with Moses and put God to the test, Moses cried out in desperation to God. God commanded Moses to strike the rock to provide water for the people. The doubt-filled question—"Is the LORD among us or not?"—received a very positive answer.

¹ From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" ³ But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" ⁴ So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. ⁶ I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16

¹ Hear my teaching, O my people;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

**² I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will declare the mysteries of ancient times—**

³ that which we have heard and known, and what our forebears
have told us,
we will not hide from their children.

**⁴ We will recount to generations to come the praiseworthy
deeds and the power of the LORD,
and the wonderful works God has done.**

¹² God worked marvels in the sight of their ancestors,
in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan,

**¹³ splitting open the sea and letting them pass through;
making the waters stand up like walls;**

¹⁴ leading them with a cloud by day,
and all the night with a glow of fire;
¹⁵ **splitting the rocks in the wilderness
and giving them drink as from the deep;**
¹⁶ bringing streams out of a rock,
making them flow down like a river.

We will recount to generations to come the power of the LORD.

SECOND READING

Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Congregation:

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

GOSPEL

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

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

Matthew 21:23-32

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ He answered, 'I will not,' but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him."

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Pr. Mike Wilker

*HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 331 As the Deer Runs to the River

HOLY BAPTISM
10:30 a.m. only

Briar Laine Bullerman, daughter of Kasey Thompson & Ryan
Bullerman (see purple insert)

***PRAYERS OF
INTERCESSION**

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our
prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence. Each petition concludes:

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask,
and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus'
name. **Amen.**

***PEACE**

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

**MINISTRY
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Find weekly prayers, announcements, and updates in the
AfterWord. View this week's edition or sign up to receive it in your
inbox each week at firstlutherandecorah.org/afterword or scan the
QR code.



MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Christ.

OFFERING

To give online, visit
firstlutherandecorah.org/give,
text the word **"GIVE"** to (563)
412-2243, or scan the QR code.

5:00 p.m. - My Faith Looks Up to Thee - Lowell Mason/John
Carter

8:15 a.m. - First Lutheran Adult Choir: Let the Word of Christ,
arr. Becki Slagle Mayo

10:30 a.m. - Lord, I Lift Your Name on High (see yellow insert)



***OFFERING PRAYER**

Refrain

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all the peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one with you.

Verse

As this cup of bles - sing is shared with - in our midst,
may we share the pres - ence of your love.

to Refrain

* Please rise in body or spirit.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

Presider: *Congregation:*

The Lord be with you. And al-so with you.

Presider: *Congregation:*

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Presider: *Congregation:*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is
right to give God thanks and praise.

...and join their unending hymn:

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

***THANKSGIVING AT
THE TABLE**

Holy God, gracious and merciful, great is your name in every generation. The eyes of all look to you, and you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

We praise you for your grace in every age: the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the words of the prophets; and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord offered for us, and, trusting his resurrection, we await his coming in power. **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we who share in Christ's body and blood may live to the praise of your glory. With your holy ones of all times and places — one generation praising your works to another — we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. **Amen.**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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. - As the Deer - Martin Nystrom/Mark Hayes

8:15 a.m. - ELW 497 Strengthen for Service, Lord &

ACS 954 You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd

10:30 a.m. - Step by Step & Oceans (see yellow insert for both)

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** Sustaining God, 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.**

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** ELW 670 Build Us Up, Lord

***DISMISSAL** Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

***POSTLUDE** 5:00 p.m. - O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing - Carl Gläser/John Carter
8:15 a.m. - Concerto del Sigr. Meck: Allegro - J. G. Walther

** Please rise in body or spirit.*

5:00PM WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

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

8:15AM WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

Pr. Mike Wilker, preaching minister
Pr. David Severtson, presiding minister
Larry Monson, assisting minister
Uwe Rudolf, reader
Judy Kittleson, communion assistant
First Lutheran Adult Choir
Mark Potvin, director
Serina Norvold Hallquist, organ
Jake Nimrod, stream team
Clarence Nimrod, stream team
Kevin & Kris Quandahl, worship welcome team
Jim Biedermann, worship welcome team

10:30AM WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

Pr. Mike Wilker, preaching minister
Pr. David Severtson, presiding minister
Carol Birkland, assisting minister
Nels Johnson, reader & communion assistant
Maren Johnson, communion assistant
Mandy Severtson, lead musician
Mark Potvin, lead musician
Eleanor Brown, lead musician
Pat Seckar, worship welcome team
Brian Erickson, worship welcome team
Jeff & Donita Joens, worship welcome team
Brian Foust & Eric Winters, worship welcome team

