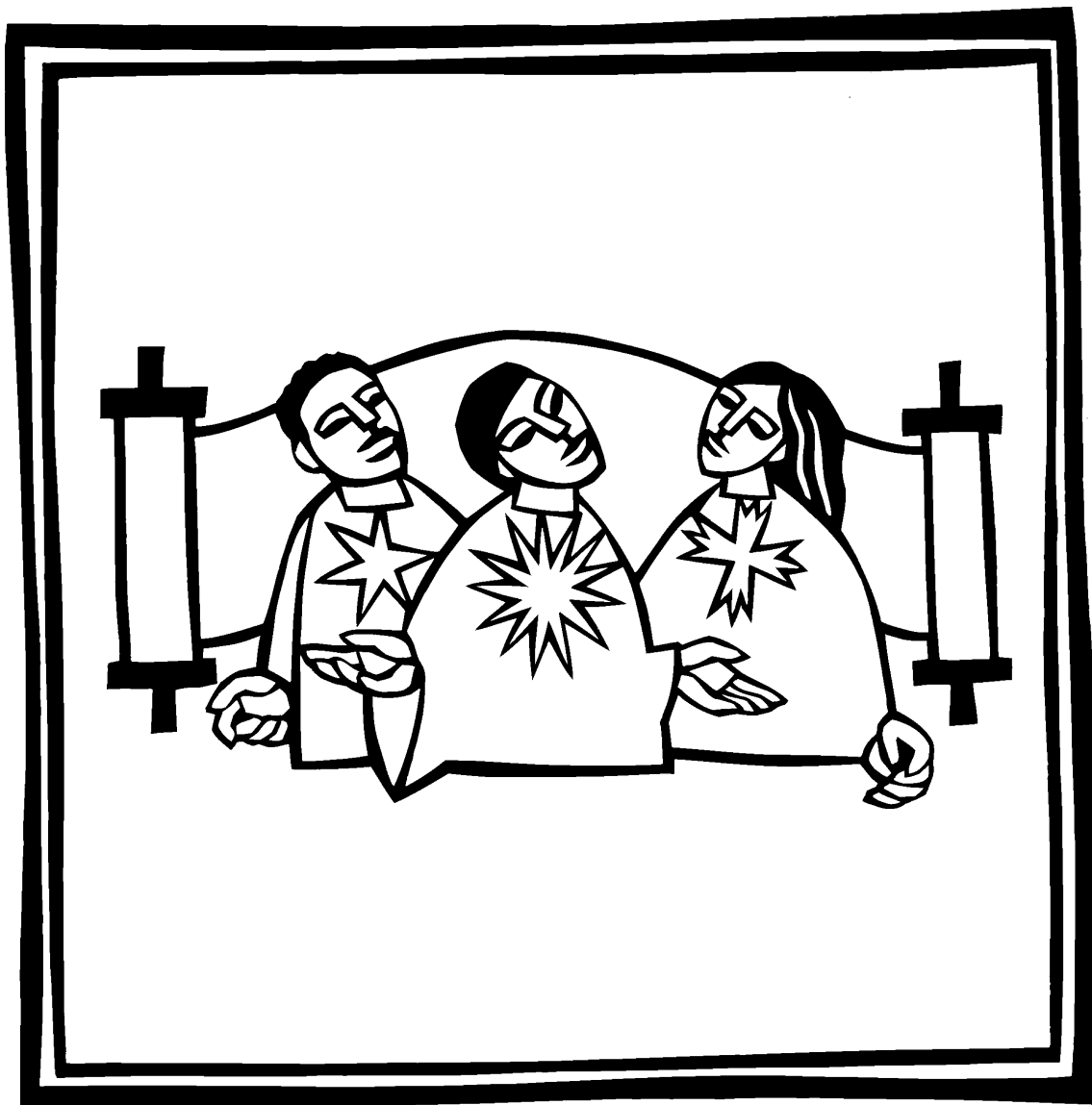




"Love your neighbor as yourself" Matthew 22:39

21st Weekend after Pentecost

October 17, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

October 18, 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), "loop" or "stream boost" 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. - How Majestic Is Your Name - Michael W. Smith/Mark Hayes
8:15 a.m. - Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing - D. Wood
10:30 a.m. - W&P66 How Majestic is Your Name (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. - ACS (purple) 1036 Commonwealth is God's Commandment
10:30 a.m. - Ask, Seek, Knock (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 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.

Refrain

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

glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er.

Refrain

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

God; to make all things new.

Refrain

***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.*

O Lord God, you are the holy lawgiver, you are the salvation of your people. By your Spirit renew us in your covenant of love, and train us to care tenderly for all our neighbors, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

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

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Sunday only

FIRST READING

Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18

The Holiness Code in Leviticus urges people to be holy because God is holy. Holiness is lived out as God's people exercise justice and love in their dealings with one another. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves.

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

² "Speak to all the congregation of the Israelites and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

¹⁵ "You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. ¹⁶ You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand idly by when the blood of your neighbor is at stake: I am the LORD.

¹⁷ "You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD."

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

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Paul uses maternal imagery to depict the caring and nurturing relationship he shares with the Thessalonian Christians. When he first came to their city it was not to benefit himself but to share the gospel with them, which was his responsibility as an apostle of Christ.

¹ You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, ² but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. ³ For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, ⁴ but, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals but to please God, who tests our hearts. ⁵ As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed, ⁶ nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, ⁷ though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. ⁸ So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

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

*Put on the spot by the Pharisees,
Jesus displays wisdom by
summarizing the law of God in
just two commandments.*

Matthew 22:34-40

³⁴ When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵ and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" ³⁷ He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

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

SERMON Pr. David Severtson

*What prevents us from loving our neighbors as ourselves?
What helps us to do this?*

God Is Love

God is love. God is love; let us love one an -

oth-er as God first loved us. God is love.

God is love. God is love.

*HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW (red) 644 Although I Speak with Angel's Tongue

HOLY BAPTISM

10:30 a.m. only

Oakley Mae Knudsen, daughter of Brennon & Klara Knudsen
(see purple insert)

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence. Each petition concludes:

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

Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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



5:00 p.m. - Be Thou My Vision - Irish melody/Molly Ijames

8:15 a.m. - Children's Choir: My Faith's Got Shoes - Mark Burrows

10:30 a.m. - Create in Me (see yellow insert)

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

*OFFERING PRAYER

God of creation, 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



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.

...and join their unending hymn:

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Presider: *Congregation:*

The Lord be with you. And al-so 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 God thanks and praise.

*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. - Jon Thompson
8:15 a.m. - ELW (red) 496 One Bread, One Body &
ELW (red) 484 You Satisfy the Hungry Heart
10:30 a.m. - You Are My King (Amazing Love) & Light the Fire
(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 (red) 705 God of Grace and God of Glory

***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/Mark Hayes
8:15 a.m. - Allegretto - G. Bohm

5:00PM WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

Pr. David Severtson, preaching & presiding minister
Sue Ellingsen, reader
Kendra van Sloten, communion assistant
Mike Ellingsen, piano
Jon Thompson, musical offering
Doug & Kendra van Sloten, worship welcome team

**8:15AM WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:**

Pr. David Severtson, preaching minister
Pr. Mike Wilker, presiding minister
Peter van der Linden, assisting minister
Lindy Borske-Hubbard, reader & communion assistant
First Lutheran Children's Choir
 Sarah Schacherer, director
Serina Norvold Hallquist, organ
Noah Potvin, stream team
Roger & Vicky Jaeger, worship welcome team
Bill & Kelli Courtney, worship welcome team
John Noel, worship welcome team

10:30AM WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

Pr. David Severtson, preaching minister
Pr. Mike Wilker, presiding minister
Jarrad Walter, assisting minister
Betsy Ratashak-Vogel, reader
Simon Vogel, communion assistant
Mandy Severtson, lead musician
Mark Potvin, lead musician
Scott & Emily Timm and Isis, worship welcome team
Jim Biedermann, worship welcome team
JoAn Nelson, worship welcome team