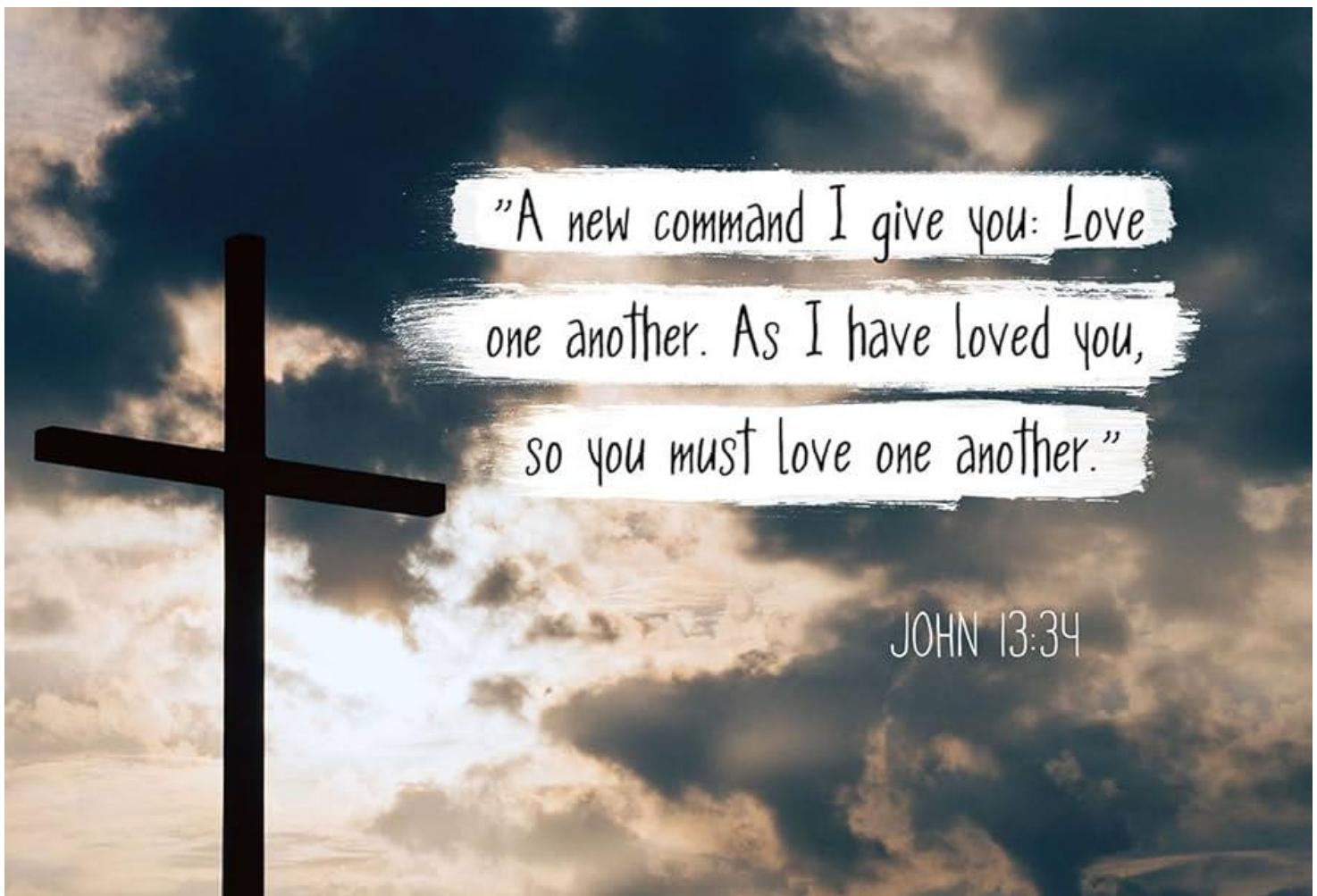


First Lutheran

relationships that transform



Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 18, 2025

Welcome to worship at First Lutheran Church.

We worship God using the form of worship which has been used by Christians throughout church history, which is commonly called “liturgical worship.” Liturgy is defined as the “work of the people,” which means that this is a participatory form of worship for all people, whether leading from the front, or singing and responding as a part of the congregation.

In worship, we come out of the chaos of the world to prepare ourselves to meet God, who is revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Through confession/forgiveness, prayer, and proclamation of the Word of God, we are led to the center of our worship which is the celebration of Holy Communion (also called the Lord’s Supper or Eucharist). It is in that act of eating and drinking the true body and blood of Jesus in the forms of bread and wine, that we make a sacred connection with God. As our worship concludes, we are sent back into the world, as people who have been changed by an encounter with God, to be light in the midst of the chaos and confusion of the world.



Are you having trouble hearing the sermon?

An assistive listening system is available in our sanctuary.

You may select a receiver from the basket in the rear of the sanctuary, near the sound booth; please return it following worship.

There are **printed** copies of the sermon available in the narthex near the bulletins

From SundaysandSeasons.com. Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress.

All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #35821.

Additional music reprinted by permission under CCLI License #3104770 and One License A-735793

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 18, 2025

8:15 am & 10:45 am

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to worship, we are glad that God has brought us together today! If you are visiting us today, please fill out a card to receive more information about First Lutheran Church. The cards are in the narthex near the bulletins or from an usher or staff member.

NURSERY

Children 3 and under are invited to our staffed nursery.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Children up to 5th grade are invited to attend Children's Church. Meet the leader at the back of the sanctuary. The children meet in the chapel and will return to the service just before Holy Communion.

PRELUDE

In the Presence of Jehovah

The Chancel Choir

Please stand.

CONFESS AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father

And of the **+** Son

And of the **H**oly **S**pirit,

And of
Amen

Almighty God

Almighty God,
To whom all hearts are open, all desires known

To whom all hearts are open, all secrets known,
And from whom no secrets are hid:

And from which no secrets are hid.
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
By the inspiration of your Holy Spirit

By the inspiration of your Holy Spirit
That we may perfectly love you.

That we may perfectly love you
And worthily magnify your holy name

And worthily magnify your name
Through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

Answers

Let us

Silence is kept for reflection

Office is kept for reflection.

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

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.

In the mercy of almighty God,
Jesus Christ was given to die for us,
And for His sake
God forgives us all our sins.
As a called and ordained minister
Of the church of Christ,
And by his authority,
I therefore declare to you
The entire forgiveness of all your sins,
In the name of the Father,
And of the Son,
And of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

*The sharing of the peace is a time for us to be reconciled with one another
through the peace, love, and forgiveness of Christ.*

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

GATHERING SONG

Oh, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

1 Oh, the deep, deep love of Je - sus,
 2 Oh, the deep, deep love of Je - sus—
 3 Oh, the deep, deep love of Je - sus,

vast, un - mea - sured, boundless, free! Roll-ing as a
 spread his praise from shore to shore! How he loves us,
 love of ev - ery love the best! 'Tis an o - cean

might-y o - cean in its full-ness o - ver me!
 ev - er loves us, chang-es nev - er, nev - ermore!
 vast of blessing, 'tis a ha - ven sweet of rest!

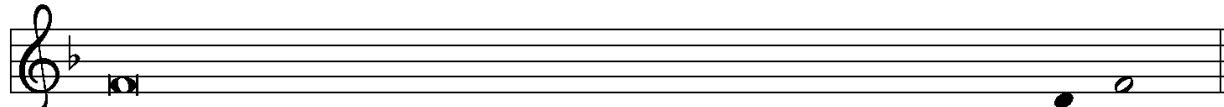
GREETING

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.

KYRIE



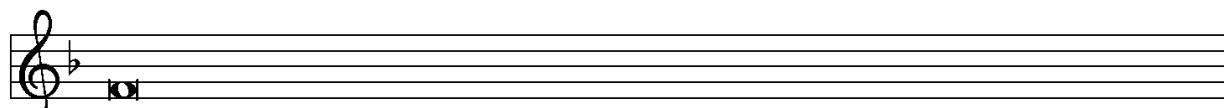
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



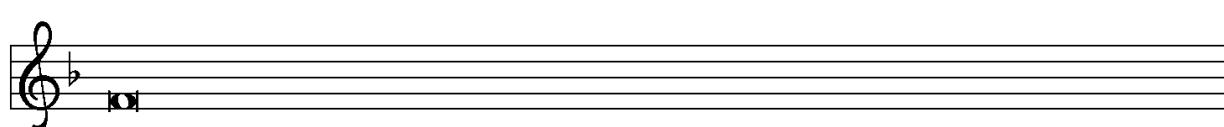
Lord, have mer - cy.



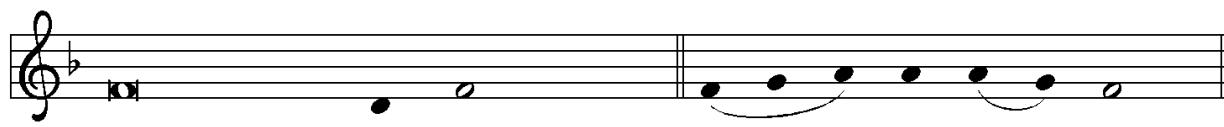
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



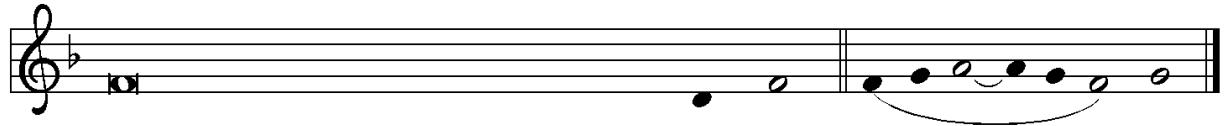
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

1 Worthy is Christ, the Lamb
who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

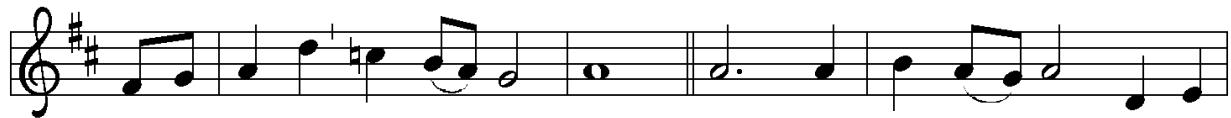
Refrain

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

2 Power, riches, wisdom, and
strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are his.

Refrain

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of



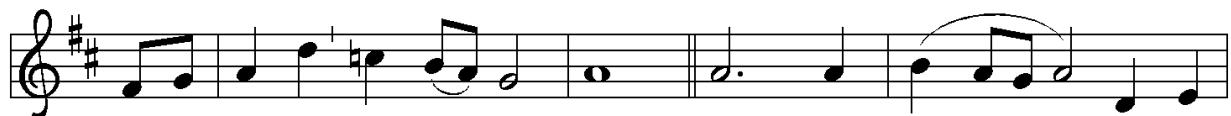
God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,



glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was



slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord God, you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated

BLESSING OF THE LECTOR

Let us pray.

Bless, O Lord, your servant as they read to us the Holy Word. May our hearts burn within us as you open to us the scriptures, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Acts 11:1 – 18

¹ Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³ saying, “Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?” ⁴ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸ But I replied, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹ But a second time the voice answered from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, you must not call profane.’ ¹⁰ This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹ At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.’ ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷ If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?” ¹⁸ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: Revelation 21:1 – 6

¹ I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.”

⁵ And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

CELTIC ALLELUIA!

Fintan O'Carroll/Christopher Walker

REFRAIN



(Refrain sung by Cantor, then ALL sings before and after verse)

GOSPEL: John 13:13 – 35

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

Resurrection Love

Pastor Jeff Borgwardt

SILENT REFLECTION

Please stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

A New Commandment

Music: Traditional English melody, 16th century
GREENSLEEVES 8.7.8.7 with refrain

Text: Donna Ashby 2025

The musical score consists of three staves of music in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff is for the soprano, the second for the alto, and the third for the bass. The music is a traditional English melody, specifically Greensleeves, arranged in an 8.7.8.7 format with a refrain. The lyrics are as follows:

1 O list - en my chil - dren I am with you a little lon-ger
2 Love is pa- tient love is kind not en - vi ous or boast - ful
3 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul

You'll look to me but I say to you where I'm go ing you cannot foll-ow
It believes and hopes and endures all things, the love of Christ is end-less.
For God so loved the world that He gave His o nly Son

This this is my new co -mmand -ment love each o -ther as I've loved you

This th - is will show each one that y o u are my dis - ci -ples

APOSTLE'S 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 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.

HYMN**Let My Prayer Rise Up**

All



Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be - fore you, the



lift-ing up of my hands as an of - fer-ing to you.

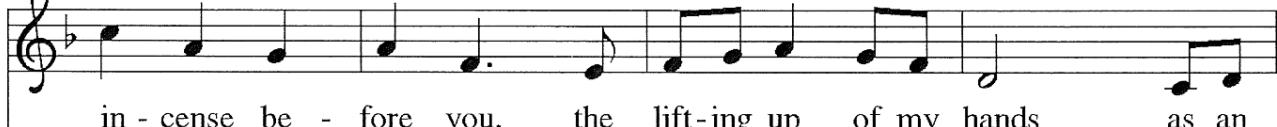
Leader or Group One



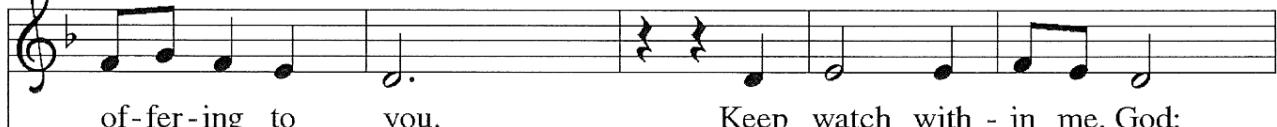
O God, I call to you, come to me now; oh, hear my



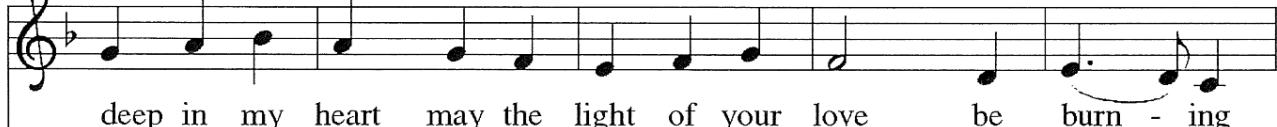
voice when I cry to you. Let my prayer rise up like



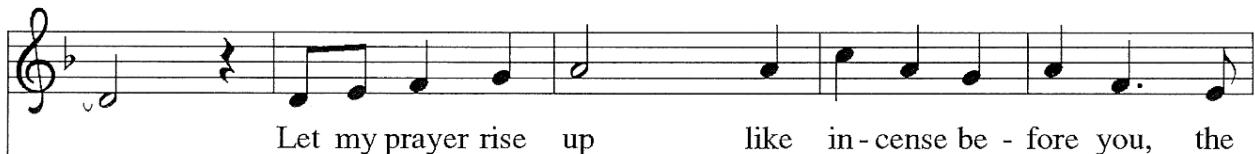
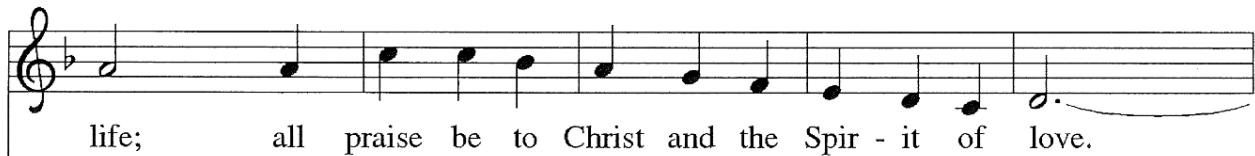
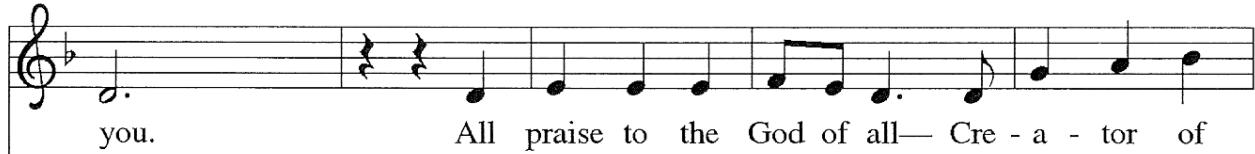
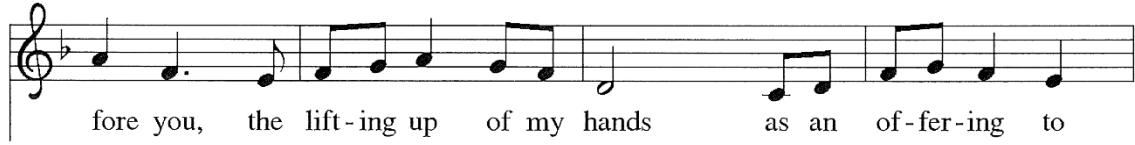
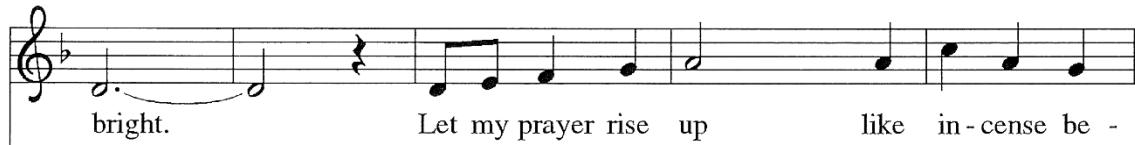
in - cense be - fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an



of - fer-ing to you. Keep watch with - in me, God;



deep in my heart may the light of your love be burn - ing

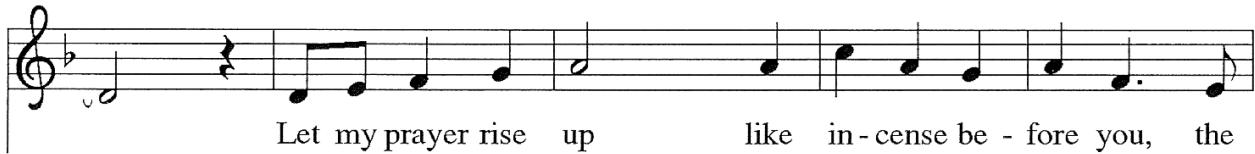


PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends with: Lord, in your mercy

Congregational response: Hear our prayer

Receive our prayers...in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen**



Please be seated.

OFFERING ANTHEM

They'll Know We are Christians

The Chancel Choir

Please stand.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

As the gifts are presented, the congregation sings.

Give Thanks



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be-cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am



rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. And



now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am

Last time



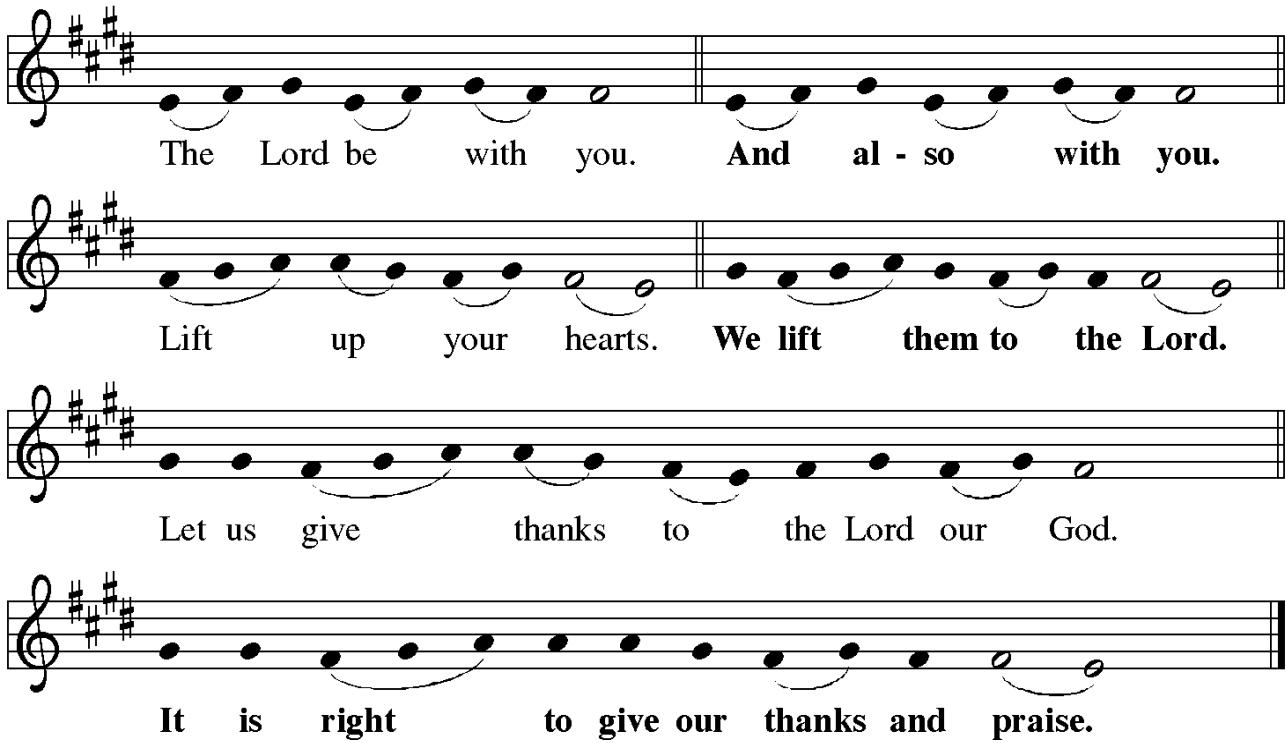
rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Risen One,
you have gathered us around your table of grace
along with these gifts we bring.
Come among us again,
breathe your life into us,
and enliven us with this meal,
that we may live as your risen body in the world.
Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



The musical notation consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and common time. The lyrics are integrated into the music, with each staff containing a line of text corresponding to the melody. The lyrics are:

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 our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right...we praise your name and join in their unending hymn.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
 pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCARISTIC PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

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

The gifts of God for the people of God. . .

Please be seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All baptized Christians are welcome to commune. We teach that Holy Communion is a celebration of the real presence of Christ under forms of bread and wine. For those who prefer, cups in the center ring of the tray are filled with white grape juice. If you wish to receive a blessing, signal this by crossing your arms against your chest.

COMMUNION SONG

Lamb Of God

Tod Sechrist

Women *Men* *All*

Je - su, Lamb of God, You take a - way the sins of the world, have

Women *Men* *All*

mer - cy on - - - us. Je - su, Bread of Life, You take a - way the

Women *Men* *All*

sins of the world, have mer - cy on - - - us. Je - sus, Prince of Peace, You

take a - way the sins of the world, Grant us You - - r peace.

All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly



1 All who hun-ger, gath-er glad - ly; ho - ly man - na is our bread.
 2 All who hun-ger, nev - er strang-ers; seek-er, be a wel-come guest.
 3 All who hun-ger, sing to - geth - er, Je - sus Christ is liv - ing bread.



Come from wil - der - ness and wan - d'ring. Here in truth we will be fed.
 Come from rest - less - ness and roam - ing. Here in joy we keep the feast.
 Come from lone - li - ness and long - ing. Here in peace we have been fed.



You that yearn for days of full - ness, all a - round us is our food.
 We that once were lost and scat - tered in com - mu - nion's love have stood.
 Blest are those who from this ta - ble live their days in grat - i - tude.



Taste and see the grace e - ter - nal. Taste and see that God is good.
 Taste and see the grace e - ter - nal. Taste and see that God is good.
 Taste and see the grace e - ter - nal. Taste and see that God is good.



Jesus, Name Above All Names

D F[#]m⁷

Je - sus, name a - bove all names, beau - ti - ful

D F[#]m⁷

man - u - el, God is with us, bless- ed Re -

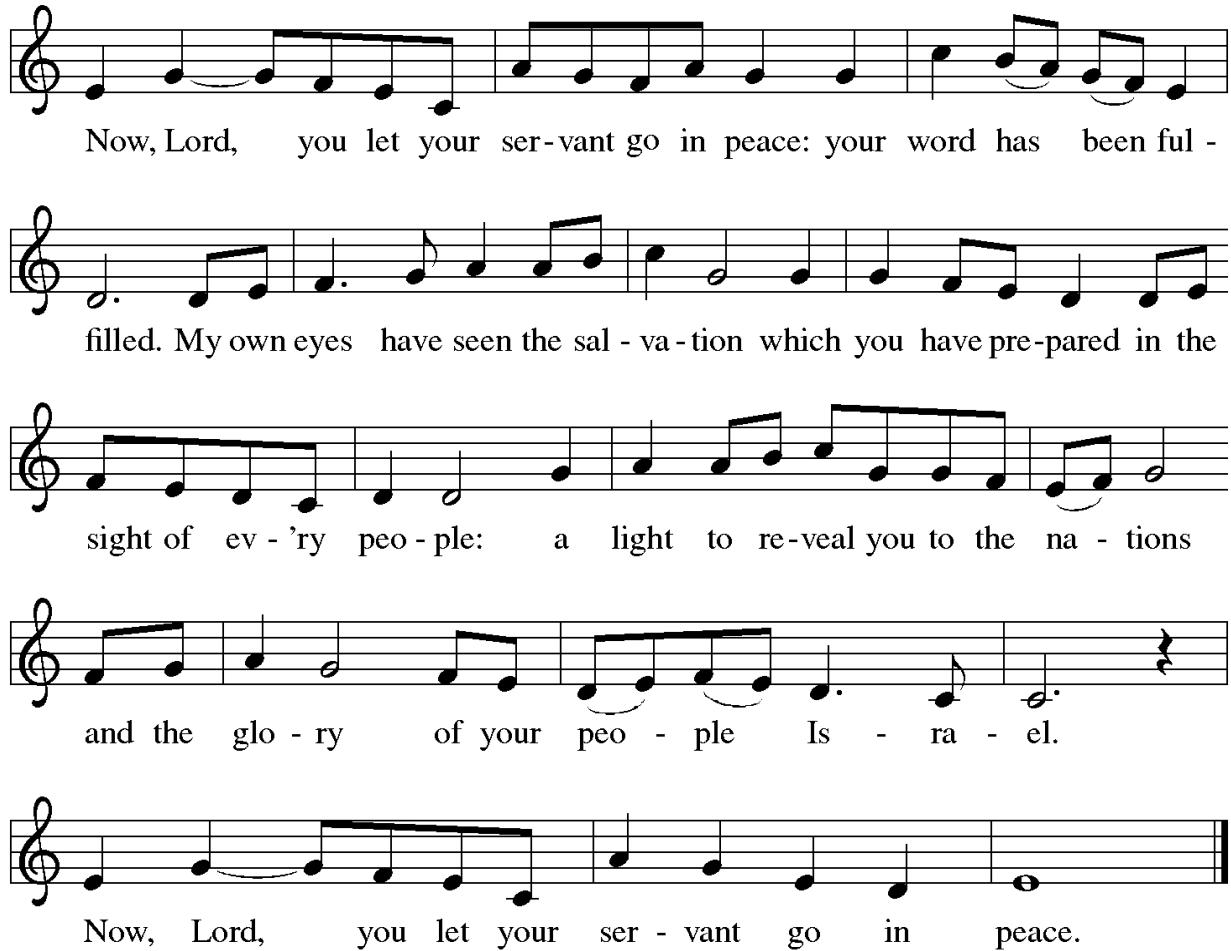
Em⁷ *Optional repeat*
 D G/A A *Last time*
 D

deem - er, liv - ing Word. Word.

Please stand.

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us in His grace. **Amen.**

CANTICLE



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful -

filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre-pared in the

sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the na - tions

and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

Now, Lord, you let your ser - vant go in peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Living One,
in this feast you have made yourself known to us.
Send us now to tell of your wonders,
sing of your glory,
and proclaim your risen life
to a wounded and weary world.
Amen.

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look upon you with favor, and give you peace.
Amen.

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less

earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell-ing, all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
 find thy prom-ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Go in peace. We are formed and loved by Christ to live!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT WEEK:

Monday, May 19	Tuesday, May 20	Wednesday, May 21
9:30 am Staff Meeting 6:00 pm 3 B's for Men 6:00 pm Bunco	9:30 am Friendship Circle 4:30 – 5:30 pm Fitness Class 6:00 pm Book Club 6:30 pm Spiritual Journey	10:00 am Quilters 5:45 pm Mentoring Plus 6:45 pm Bell Choir 7:00 pm Choir
Thursday, May 22	Friday, May 23	Saturday, May 24
4:30 – 5:30 pm Fitness Class		2:00 – 4:00 pm Private Event in the Fellowship Hall
Sunday, May 25 Graduation Sunday	Volunteer Schedule this week: May 18	Volunteer Schedule next week: May 25
8:15 am Worship with Holy Communion, and Children's Church. 9:30 am Graduation reception 10:00 am Choir Rehearsal 10:45 am Worship with Holy Communion, and Children's Church. 6:00 pm Bible Study	Lector: 8:15 am: Carolyn Ramirez 10:45 am: Jim Meyer Communion: Set up: Gloria Bero Clean Up: Eva Touchstone Offering Counters: Ranette Carter & Arlene Hicks	Lector: 8:15 am: Corrine Perry 10:45 am: Nancy Lineberry Communion: Set up: Ed Bero Clean Up: Leslie Jenkins Offering Counters: Kyle Lybarger & Teresa DeShazer

Readings for in preparation for Sunday, May 25:

Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10, 22 – 22:5; John 14:23-29

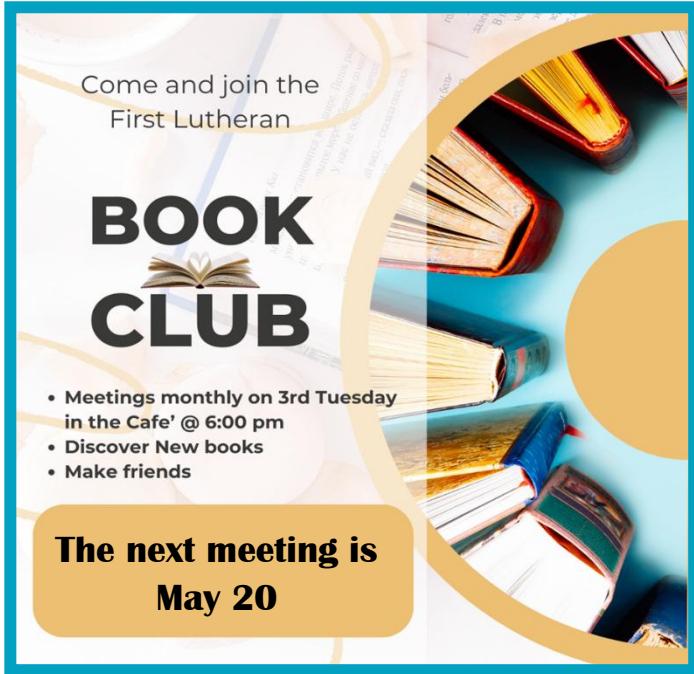
ANNOUNCEMENTS



Congratulations to
Graduate Hayley Lybarger!
She will be honored on Sunday May 25th
with a Reception at 9:30 am



Bibles, Buddies & Beverages
Men's Fellowship
May 19 @ 6:00 pm
FLC Fellowship Hall



Save the Date

15th Annual Ladies Retreat

July 26th 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Mark your calendar now!

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY



Stepping into God's will and purpose for your life

TUESDAYS
6:30 PM

Join us in taking steps that can help develop a healthy, peaceful, and harmonious relationship with God, with others, and with yourself.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the people I cannot change, the courage to change the one I can, & the wisdom to know that one is Me. Living one day at a time; Enjoying one moment at a time; Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; Taking, as Jesus Christ did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; Trusting that Jesus will make all things right if I surrender to His will. So, that I may be reasonably happy in this life & supremely happy with Him forever & ever in the next! Amen!

SERENITY PRAYER

First Lutheran Church
3901 Bill Owens Parkway
Longview, Texas 75605
(903) 295-7423

The Success Center

Family Improvement

Food & Childcare Provided

Tuesdays 6:30 - 7:30pm

A New Parenting Class Starting May 27th

FLC Members

Holland Caraway having cancer treatments.

Gerri Aude's son, Scott, is in kidney failure and is about to start dialysis and has RSV.

Pray for the children and teens who attend our church and The Success Center.

Pray for church growth, numerically and spiritually.

Pray for wisdom and direction for our church leadership.

Pray for the homebound of our church and their caregivers.

Jane Bailey

Robert Kohnfelder

Durwin Sewell

Mary Ann Gamel

Chuck & Paula Kaplan

Bruno Schueler

Patty Lowe

Johnnie Owens

Family and Friends of FLC Members

Carmella Davis is having reconstruction on her hip.

Linda Spina, friend of Kathleen Bullock, has cancer. She is not tolerating her Immunotherapy well.

Neil Thompson's sister, Jeanette, is recovering from a car wreck that has paralyzed her.

Bob Rogers, Carolyn Ramirez' brother-in-law, has been admitted to hospice.

Bob Farrish, brother-in-law of Renee Slegeir, has pancreatic cancer.

Kerri Craddock, daughter-in-law, of Larry & Carol Craddock, has breast cancer.

Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers.

Those who are imprisoned.

The homeless

Members Serving in the Military

Eric Jenkins – Ft. Meade, MD

Terrina Anderson – Army, Ft. Huachuca, Az

Timothy Martin – Navy

Hannah Perry – Army, San Antonio, Tx

FINANCIAL REPORT

Church Cash Flow Year to Date as of:

05/11/2025

Regular Church Offering: 2025	
Contributions:	\$ 171,710
Expenditures:	\$ 208,922
Difference:	\$ (37,212)

Building Maintenance Fund Activity: 2025	
Contributions:	\$ 32,156
Expenditures:	\$ 550
Difference:	\$ 31,606

Summer Camp: 2025	
Donations	\$ 8,925
Expenditures:	\$ 13,928
Difference:	\$ (5,003)

Respectfully,

Karen Smith

CAMPERSHIPS

MAKING CAMP HAPPEN

Those who want to help with our Campership Fund for kids going to Camp Chrysalis please use the blue envelopes in the hymnal racks in each pew.

We have 23 kids and 5 adults who will be attending camp this year
June 8 - 13.

The adults are Pastor Jeff, John Parsons, Belinda Walenta, Ann Hanley and Lakeita Walker.
(Prayers are appreciated. 😊)

GOSPEL MESSAGE

May 18, 2025

The Deceptive Simplicity of Love

As the Gospel of John portrays Jesus, the rabbi often speaks in cryptic terms, and his teachings in today's reading are no exception. "The Son of Man has been glorified"? "Where I am going, you cannot come"? (John 13:31, 33). The disciples must have heard Jesus' instructions about love with a sigh of relief—finally, clear words. They are given a new commandment, to love one another, just as Jesus has loved them. All they must do is love each other, and everyone will know they're Jesus' disciples.

One wonders how long it took before the disciples realized just how complicated this was going to be. If we're honest, we have to ask, Have we figured it out in the past 2,000-plus years? After all, Jesus' love often mystifies us. Whom does he love? The leper. The tax collector. The outcast. The rich young man. The person living with addiction. The collections agent. The teen who just tagged your wall with spray paint. The wealthy CEO.

Suddenly, this loving doesn't look so easy.

The context of this week's passage makes it clear that Jesus isn't averse to speaking truth in love. Just before today's exchange, Jesus signals to Judas that he knows what he's up to. Just after, he cautions overeager Peter that despite his best intentions, he too will betray Jesus. Love isn't syrupy and bland, slathered across our world in rosy hues that cover up injustice or hard times.

Love is a commitment. Love extends outward from Jesus, through us, to bring everyone whom Jesus loves into the communion of saints. That means Judas, and Peter, and the graffiti tagger, and the CEO—and you. Us. Every person, in every pew, and every child of God who couldn't identify a pew if they skinned their shin on one.

Each of our communities is a little different. Our everyday "each others" are different too. But the good news is, "each other" always includes everyone—even us.

Assisting In Worship Today

Celebrant: Jeffrey Borgwardt

Musicians: Donna Ashby, Pat Mueller
and The Chancel Choir

Live Stream: 8:15 am Deb Butts,
Eric Chandler, and Daniel Chandler

10:45 am: Diane Borgwardt

Lectors:

8:15 am: Carolyn Ramirez

10:45 am: Jim Meyer

Church Staff

Jeffrey E. Borgwardt, Pastor

Donna Ashby, Director of Music

John Parsons, Dir. of Youth and Family Min.

Tina Sewell, Secretary

Karen Smith, Bookkeeper

2025 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Kyle Lybarger (*President*)

Beverly Bell (*Vice-President*)

Rachel Grundmann (*Secretary*)

Ranette Carter (*Treasurer*)

Jenn Belcourt (*Relationship with God*)

Johnny Davis (*Relationship with Community*)

Peri Topel (*Relationship with One Another*)

3901 Bill Owens Parkway

Longview, Texas 75605

903-295-7423

churchsecretary@firstlutheran.us

www.FirstLutheran.us

We receive gifts for the mission of the congregation and the Church in the world. An offering plate is available in the back of the sanctuary. If you prefer to give by credit card you may do so at www.firstlutheran.us/donate or by scanning the QR code below



FLC regularly supports the work of the following ministries of our denomination and community with financial, volunteer, and food offerings:

Longview Community Ministries

Newgate Mission

Living Water International

Lutheran World Relief

Lutheran Disaster Response

For more information on how to get involved contact the church office (903)295-7423.