

Holy Cross Sunday September 14, 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

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13[™] SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SEPTEMBER 7, 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

I Worship You, Almighty God

The Chancel Choir

Please stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
And of the + Son,
And of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Since we have such a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus Christ our Lord, let us with confidence draw near to God, That we may receive mercy and find grace in time of need.

Let us make personal confession of our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

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

Gracious God.

We acknowledge that we are sinners, and we confess our sins – Those known to us and that burden our hearts, And those unknown to us but seen by You.

We know that before you nothing remains hidden, and in you everything is revealed.

Free us from the slavery of sin; liberate us from the bondage of guilt; work in us that which is pleasing in your sight; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

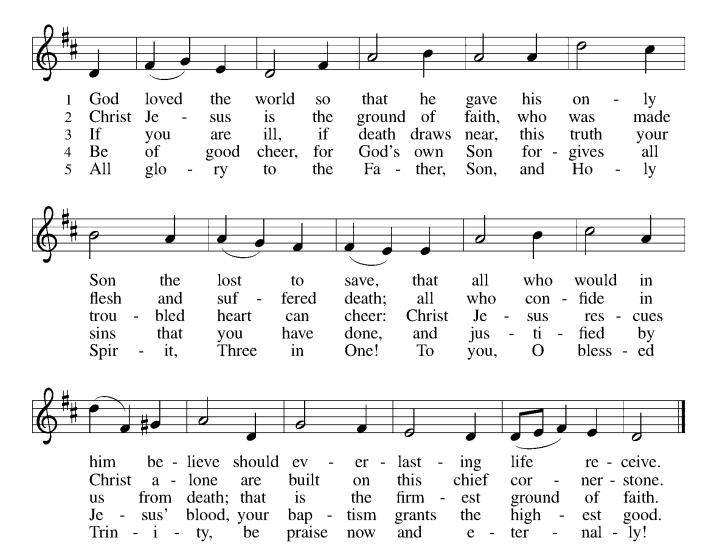
God is merciful and gracious, granting forgiveness through Jesus Christ to all who confess their sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ and by His authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father, and of the Holy Spirit Amen.

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.

God Loved the World



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



CANTICLE OF PRAISE



All the mar-tyrs and your faith-ful peo-ple wor-ship you.___



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross so that he might draw the whole world to himself. To those who look upon the cross, grant your wisdom, healing, and eternal life, through 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.

Gracious God, we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from you. Bless our lector who will read to us the scriptures. Make us hunger for the Word of life, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4b – 9

[From Mount Hor the Israelites set out,] ^{4b} but the people became discouraged on the way. ⁵ The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." ⁶ Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷ The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸ And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." ⁹ So Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole, and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18 – 24

¹⁸ The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,

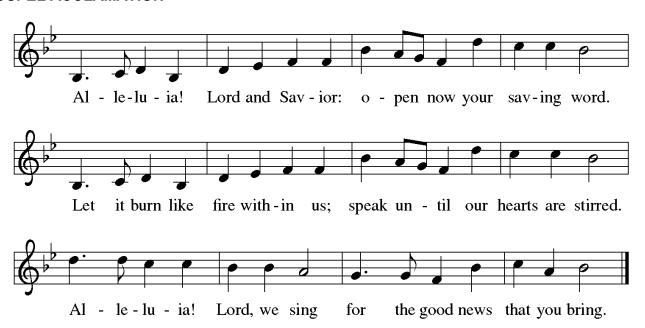
"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

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

Please stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: John 3:13 – 17

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹³ "No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of

Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him."

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

Please be seated.

SERMON A Sign of Love for the World

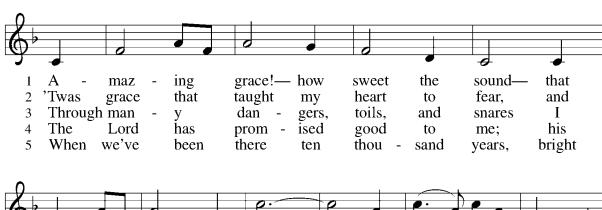
Pastor Jeffrey Borgwardt

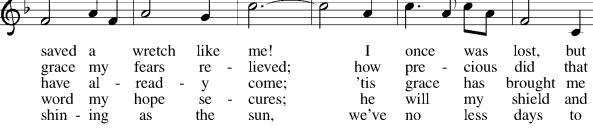
SILENT REFLECTION

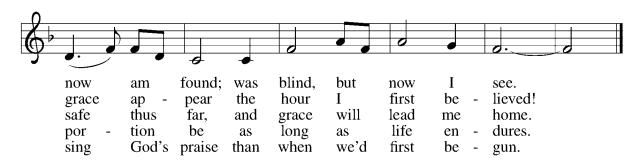
Please stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 779

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound





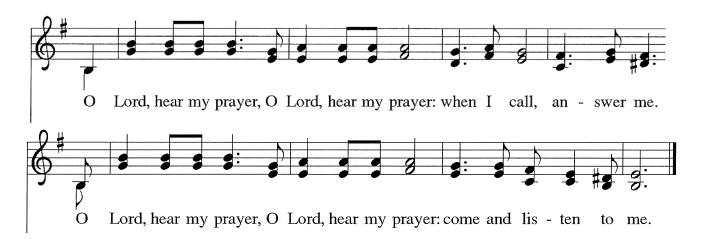


APOSTLE'S CREED

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

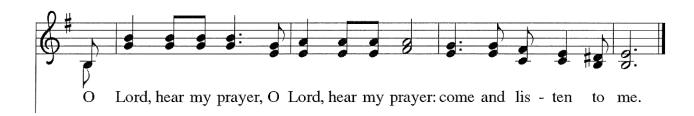
O Lord, Hear My Prayer



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

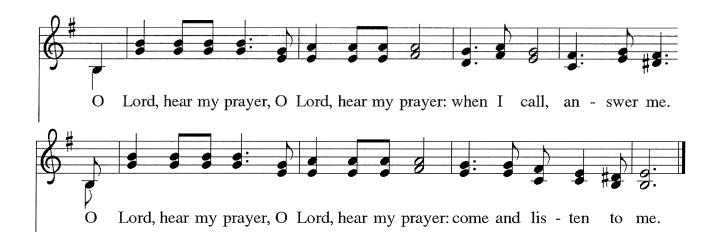
Each petition ends with: O Lord, hear our prayer.

Congregational response:



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

O Lord, Hear My Prayer



Please be seated.

OFFERING ANTHEM

Please stand.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

As the gifts are presented, the congregation sings.

God, Whose Giving, Knows No Ending



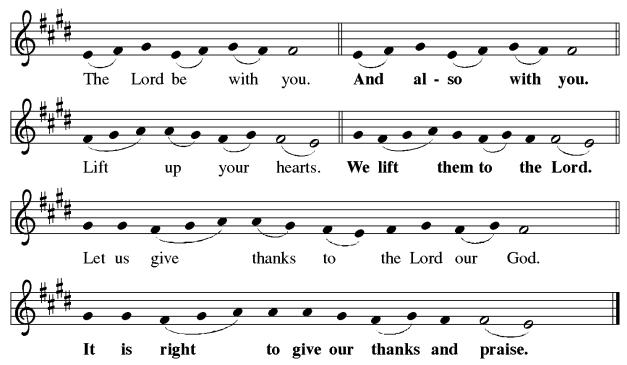
OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

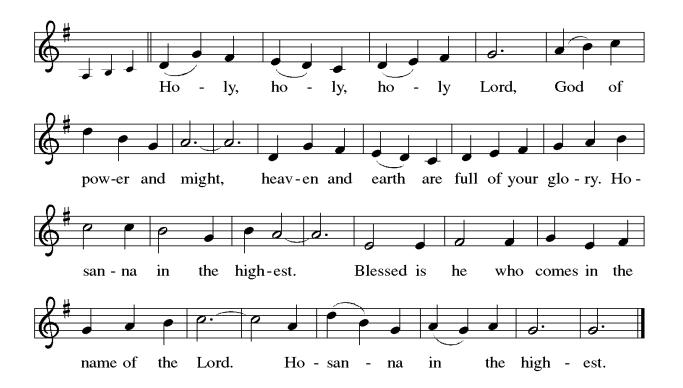
Lord of the harvest,
we return to you a portion of what you have given to us.
Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches,
but on you, who richly provides for us.
Multiply what we have gathered
to bless all who are suffering and in need,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



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



EUCHARISTIC 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. . .

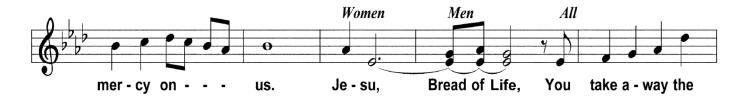
Please be seated.

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







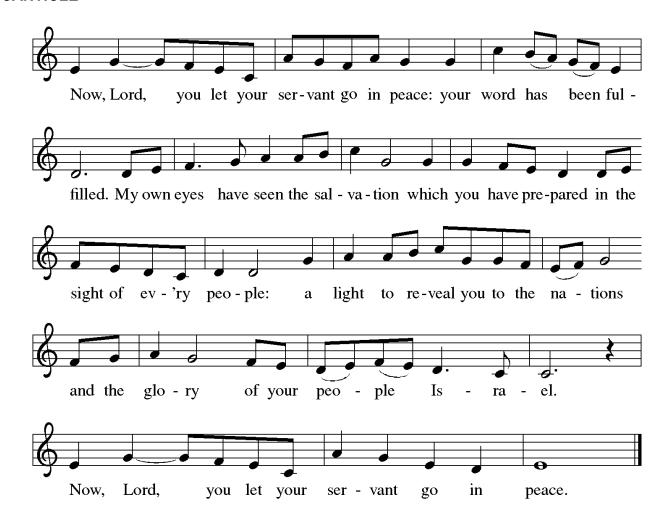




Please stand.

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

CANTICLE



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

O God.

through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

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.

SENDING HYMN ELW 660

Lift High the Cross



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

Thanks be to God!

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT WEEK:

Monday, September 15	Tuesday, September 16	Wednesday, September 17	
9:30 am Staff Meeting	9:30 am Friendship Circle	10:00 am Quilters	
6:00 pm 3 B's for Men	3:30 pm Success Center	5:00 – 6:00 pm Dinner	
6:00 pm Bunco	4:30 pm Fitness Class	5:45 pm Bell Choir	
	6:00 pm Book Club	5:45 pm Mentoring plus	
	6:30 pm Spiritual Journey	6:00 pm Confirmation Class	
	6:30 pm Family Improvement	7:00 pm Choir	
	Times vary for Scout meetings	7:00 pm Youth Group	
Thursday, September 18	Friday, September 19	Saturday, September 20	
3:30 pm Success Center	9:00 am – 3:00 pm Set up for Private	8:00 am – 5:00 pm Private Event in	
4:30 pm Fitness Class	Event in Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Hall	
6:30 pm Council Meeting			
Sunday, September 21	Volunteer Schedule September 14	Volunteer Schedule September 21	
8:15 am Worship with Holy	Lector:	Lector:	
Communion, and Children's	8:15 am: Donna Ashby	8:15 am: Danny Chandler	
Church.	10:45 am: Rachel Grundmann	10:45 am: Pat Cowan	
9:30 am Bible Study	Communion:	Communion:	
10:30 am Choir warm-up	Set up: Carol & Ray Bird	Set up: Gloria Bero	
10:45 am Worship with Holy	Clean Up: Teresa DeShazer & Randi	Clean Up: Eva Touchstone	
Communion, and Children's	McRae	Offering Counters:	
Church.	Offering Counters:	Bill Anderson & Kyle Lybarger	
	Peri Topel &		
	Rachel Grundmann		

Readings for in preparation for Sunday, September 21:

Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

ANNOUNCEMENTS



September 15th 6:00 pm in the Church Kitchen



September 15th 6:00 pm in the Church Café



September 16th 6:00 pm in the Church Café



Free Tutoring
Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30—5:30
To volunteer contact John Parsons
or the church office.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

FRIENDSHIP

CIRCLE

September 16th 9:30 am in the Conference Room



HELP NEEDED FOR THE FAMILY IMPROVEMENT MEAL

One of the things that makes the Family Improvement class work so well for families is that we serve them a meal. We are currently serving supper to 13 adults and 8 children. (These numbers change as registrations come in.) We need volunteers to help cook. Those who are willing to help in this way, please contact the church office or Donna Louvier who is coordinating the meals (903-399-8553) or donnalouvier@gmail.com.



Registration forms and Scholarship forms are in the narthex.



OCTOBER 18th at Longview Mall 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

FLC will have a craft booth set up and we will be promoting the Trunk or Treat event.

Volunteer Sign-up sheet in the narthex.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Church Cash Flow Year to Date as of:

09/08/2025

	Regular Church Offering: 2025				
F30/F2294	Contributions:	\$	342,274		
	Expenditures:	\$	318,992		
	Difference:	\$	23,282		

Building Maintenance Fund Activity: 2025				
Contributions:	\$	60,870		
Expenditures:	\$	15,535		
Difference:	\$	45,335		

Respectfully,
Karen Smith

STREET STREET STREET STREET STREET



Today is the day for the **Legacy Giving for Family and Ministry Seminar** at **9:30 am**. Please join us for the seminar as we share significant ideas in planning for the future. We'll meet in the activity room and enjoy learning more about legacy generosity together!

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please send all prayer requests and updates to the church office at: prayerchain@firstlutheran.us

FLC Members

David Smith is having a reoccurrence of B Cell Lymphoma.

Holland Caraway is having cancer treatments.

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 Joseph Carlson

Albert Holmen

Family and Friends of FLC Members

The family of Dewayne Jenkins, Stewart Jenkins' who died August 27, 2025.

Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers.

Those who are imprisoned.

The homeless

Members Serving in the Military

Eric Jenkins – Air Force, Ft. Meade, MD
Terrina Anderson – Army, Ft. Huachuca, Az
Hannah Perry – Army, San Antonio, Tx

GOSPEL MESSAGE

September 14, 2025

Saving Presence

An internet meme circulating a few years ago chided its audience, "If God didn't send Jesus into the world to condemn it, I doubt God sent you to." It's hard to refrain from judgment, especially when so many social pressures tempt us to judge ourselves as right and everyone else as wrong. John's gospel puts such competitions to rest: God loves everyone and everything—the whole world, all of creation, every person and part of the entire cosmos, all that is.

At first take, we might be baffled that we lift up the cross as the place where God's expansive love is so significantly shown for us. But through Christ's crucifixion, death, and resurrection, God works to unravel all the violence that leads to things like crucifixion in the first place. In the cross, God's presence is with us: God has taken on all of our human suffering so we can know that Christ's loving presence is with us when we are hurting too. God accompanies us through hardships. God brings new life in the midst of death! This is the mysterious power of the cross.

Every time God gathers us for holy communion, we remember that night when Jesus faced these hardest moments. Before being lifted up on the cross, he broke bread and shared wine and promised to remain with us always. Jesus continues to be with us in the holy meal even all these centuries later: in bread and wine, for us, lifted high. Indeed, this is the presence we need. It is the presence that sustains us at work, at school, at play. It is the presence that makes grace real. It is the presence that saves us from sin and death, always.

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: Donna Ashby

10:45 am: Rachel Grundmann

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.