



**PRAY
BOLDLY
AND
PERSISTENTLY**

**FOR THE SALVATION OF THE LOST
THROUGH THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
AND GOD'S PEOPLE WHO LOVE OTHERS WITH GOD'S LOVE**

WORSHIP CELEBRATION

8:30 and 11:15 am SERVICES

The First Sunday of Lent

February 21, 2021

WELCOME TO THE FELLOWSHIP AND WORSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Our prayer is that you would be encouraged spiritually today . . .
and that you would be encouraged in the fellowship of Jesus-followers.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Charlotte Michigan

WELCOME

Welcome to our corporate worship at First Lutheran Church. We pray that God's word and Spirit would touch your heart and mind and life this morning to give you assurance in Him . . . but also new zeal for wrapping your life around Him . . . and eagerly giving yourself first to Him . . . and totally to Him.

As we come into the Lord's presence today, reflect on our great and wonderful God, who has created us and then brought us into Himself through His grace. In His grace, He has forgiven our sin through Jesus, who gave His life to take the punishment for our sin. With this relationship, we have the sovereign, gracious God as the center of our existence. May we always hold that treasure dearly.

"CONNECTION FORM" AND PRAYER REQUESTS

(a blue insert in your bulletin)

We are asking that every individual or family complete a "Connection Form" and put it into the offering basket at the back of the sanctuary.

Please identify all family members participating.

Please also share your prayer requests.

OUR FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH COMMUNION POLICY

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at First Lutheran in the belief and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold any understanding different from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive this sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an elder.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR OUR CELEBRATION

WE ENTER INTO GOD'S PRESENCE

AN EXPRESSION OF WORSHIP

Pastor: We have come together as people of God – His creation, His chosen.
We worship in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: To You, O God, be all glory and praise.

Pastor: LORD, You have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.

**All: Before the mountains were born . . .
or You brought forth the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting You are God. (Psalm 90:1-2)**

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH IN SONG - LSB 953 - "We All Believe in One True God"

**We all believe in One True God – Father, Son, and Holy Ghost --
ever-present help in need, praised by all the heavenly host.
All He made His love enfolds; all creation He upholds.**

**We all believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Mary's Son,
Who descended from His throne and for us salvation won --
by Whose cross and death are we rescued from all misery.**

**We all confess the Holy Ghost, Who from both in truth proceeds . . .
Who sustains and comforts us in all trials, fears, and needs.
Blest and holy Trinity, praise forever Yours shall be! ,**

OUR CONFESSION OF SIN AND OF FAITH

Pastor: St. Paul wrote by inspiration of God: "The love of Christ compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again." (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)
Let us therefore gladly confess our sins and our faith in Christ and eagerly express our desire to live for Him Who died for us and was raised again.

**All: Holy Jesus, Lamb of God, Your precious blood was shed for us –
people who by ourselves are lost.**

**We were lost in sin, but You, with amazing love
took the punishment for our sin in our place.**

**Heavenly Father, thank You for Your grace –
an unfathomable gift of unmerited love.**

I am Yours through Jesus' sacrifice.

Yet I am still a sinner –

a sinner who violates Your just and holy laws.

**Spirit of God, help me examine myself . . . and see my failures,
especially failures to trust You and love You.**

Help me keep my eyes on You . . .

and help me live in faith according to Your will. Amen

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF FORGIVENESS

A PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER

O Holy God, it is with joy that we gather in Your presence to worship You. You bless us in so many ways, including especially a great variety of spiritual gifts through which You save us, renew us, enlighten us, feed us, guide us, and empower us. We now participate in a sacred meal in which we receive the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus, Who sacrificed His life for us so that we can have life forever in Your presence.

Jesus, we rejoice in You and worship You.

To You, Jesus, be all glory now and forever. Amen

OUR SONG OF PRAISE - "This Is the Feast of Victory" - LSB page 171 (Setting 2)

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

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power and riches and wisdom and strength
and honor and blessing and glory are His.**

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

**Sing with all the people of God,
and join in the hymn of all creation.
Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God
and the Lamb forever. Amen**

**This is the feast of victory for our God,
for the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia, alleluia!**

THE WORDS OF JESUS INSTITUTING THIS SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR

AN INVITATION IN SONG - "Come to the Table" - (the adult choir with the congregation)

Choir: Come to the Table of Mercy, prepared with wine and bread.
All who are hungry and thirsty, come and your souls will be fed.
Come at the Lord's invitation; receive from His nail-scarred hand.
Eat of the bread of salvation; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

Pastor: (a prayer)

Choir: Come to the Table of Mercy, prepared with wine and bread.
All who are hungry and thirsty, come and your souls will be fed.
Come at the Lord's invitation; receive from His nail-scarred hand.
Eat of the bread of salvation; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

**All: Come to the Table of Mercy, prepared with wine and bread.
All who are hungry and thirsty, come and your souls will be fed.**

**Come at the Lord's invitation; receive from His nail-scarred hand.
Eat of the bread of salvation; drink of the blood of the Lamb.**

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

We will be distributing the Lord's Supper in two ways this morning.

- We will first usher those forward who want to receive the Lord's Supper in a continuous flow as we have done for several months.
- After that, those who wish to come to the altar rail will be ushered forward. Participants will spread out along the communion rail and will be given the body of Christ in a paper cup and the blood of Christ in the individual cup.

During the distribution, please join in singing these hymns:

“The People that in Darkness Sat” - LSB 412 - stanzas 1-2, 5-6

“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” - LSB 575

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S MERCY AND GRACE THROUGH JESUS

WE DEVOTE OURSELVES TO HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING – Jeremiah 36

THE NEW TESTAMENT READING – Acts 14:1-20

THE GOSPEL READING – Matthew 9: 1-13

Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. ² Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.” ³ At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, “This fellow is blaspheming!” ⁴ Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? ⁵ Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? ⁶ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat and go home.” ⁷ Then the man got up and went home. ⁸ When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man. ⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. “Follow me,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. ¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they

asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”
¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.
¹³ But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Pastor: This is the gospel reading for today. This is good news about Jesus and His desire to save all people.

All: Lord Jesus, help us follow Your model. Amen

THE MESSAGE HYMN - LSB 831 - “How Shall They Hear Who Have Not Heard”

THE MESSAGE

**Saving the Lost Necessitates the Work of the Holy Spirit,
Who Uses Human Agents, His Word, His Power, and Baptism**

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

A PRAYER FOR OUR APPLICATION OF THE MESSAGE

**All: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

Pastor: (prayer)

**All: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

BoB 201

A PRAYER ON THE FACETS OF THIS MESSAGE SERIES

*The beginning of each prayer segment will be spoken by a prayer leader.
Worshippers, please join in praying the bolded prayer.*

O Lord, the only true God, You love us humans – Your creations. You love us with selfless, sacrificial, unconditional love. In Your awesome love, You made us Your people. **In response I want to love You above all people and things. Amen**

Gracious God, You forgave and forgive our sins and thereby made us fit to come into Your presence. We could not be Your people if You had not forgiven us. **Help us pass on Your forgiveness by forgiving others as You forgive us. Amen**

O Lord, we also observe, as the record of Scripture shows us, that You are faithful. You are faithful to who You are and faithful in keeping all Your promises. You are a model of faithfulness. Help us also follow Your model in this – in faithfulness. **Help us to be faithful to who we are – Your people – and faithful to our promises to You and to others. Amen**

Creator God, You created many of our differences in capabilities. Some of our differences are developed by our upbringing, our surroundings, our schooling, our friends, etc. We are very different people. However, You have brought us into Your family. **We are ONE in You. Help us love one another and accept one another. Let Your love in us be known to the world. Amen**

O Lord, as we have explored, You are the ultimate in hospitality. You provide for our daily needs and give us an awesome world in which to live. You have given us Jesus, our Rescuer. You have given us spiritual life, eternal life, and a heavenly home. **What a joy, O Lord, to experience Your hospitality. Help us to share Your love by being hospitable to others, including strangers. Amen**

Loving God, Your love for us is so amazing. You loved us enough to take the punishment for our sins by taking our punishment upon Yourself. Thank You for rescuing us. And now Lord, we know that You want everyone to experience Your love, to know and trust that You love them and have already taken the penalty for their sin. **Help us! Mobilize us to share Your love and good news of Your love with others. Help us snatch them from the fires of hell. To You be all the glory. Amen**

OUR GENERAL PRAYERS

THE 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

(sing)

We praise You, God, our Lord, above, for You have blessed us with Your love. We laud Your name. We love You most, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

With heart-felt thanks, we sing our praise, renewed in joy our voices raise.

With all the saints in heaven above, we praise You, God, for Your great love.

HWC 626 – "Praise God"

WE GIVE OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD AND GO OUT IN HIS LOVE

REFLECTIONS ON OUR BLESSINGS AND OUR OPPORTUNITIES

As people who have been saved from eternal punishment by a merciful God and self-sacrificing Savior, we are privileged to participate in the mission and ministry of sharing that good news with others. Our lives and our life-styles reflect our priorities. We pray that our lives and every minute of our lives would reflect our union with the true God and reflect our sincere desire to live our lives in communion with Him and in service to Him. To God be all the glory for the good accomplished in us and through us in our church, our families, our community, and in the world.

OUR CLOSING PRAYER AND PRAISE IN SONG - LSB 829 - "Christ the Eternal Lord"

THE BLESSING

Silent Prayer
Announcements

.....
We are thankful You worshiped at First Lutheran Church today.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

It is a blessing to have willing workers in the Lord's kingdom. We are thankful that so many people serve in the church and in our community. Let's encourage one another. Keyboardist today – Patty Greene . . . Bell Choir Director—Rachel Stambaugh

Credits

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A Prayer of the Church

O Lord, our heavenly Father, we remember the sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus the Christ, for our salvation. We praise You for His resurrection and His ascension to Your right hand, where He stands for us as our own high priest. Enable us to live lives of faith – just and holy. According to Your gracious plan for us, use us as Your agents of love to the people around us in this world. Spirit of God, work in us and change us in every way You desire. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor, and worship – Father, Son, and Spirit – one God now and forever. Amen

Psalm 5:12 (NIV)

**Surely, O LORD, You bless the righteous;
You surround them with Your favor as with a shield.**