



October 1, 2023

Season of Stewardship

*An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold**.*

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

we GATHER

Prelude — “God Is Here!”

Setting by Aaron David Miller

We remember through this hymn why we gather for worship: we encounter “symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace...here the cross has central place.” We look to Jesus as our Savior and ask God to “keep us faithful to the gospel” and to “help us work [God’s] purpose out.”

Words of Welcome

***Gathering Hymn** — no. 526

“God Is Here!”

Stanzas 1 & 2: All Stanza 3: Choir Stanza 4: All

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be God,
the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.
Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.

Steadfast and faithful God,
**you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.**

**We are overwhelmed
by the world’s violence and suffering.
We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.**

**For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.**

**For the unjust demands
we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.
For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.
Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, God’s justice stretches
beyond all understanding. God’s
compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way
for us. In ✠ Christ, we are already and
always forgiven.
Amen.

***Greeting, Kyrie, Cantic of Praise** — pg. 120 & 122, front of hymnal, ELW Setting Two

***Prayer of the Day**

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

we LISTEN and RESPOND

A Reading from the prophet Ezekiel — Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The word of the Lord came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Grace-filled Word for creating generous hearts. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 25:1-9 — sung responsively by verse between choir and congregation



To | you, O Lord,

I lift | up my soul.

**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.**

Let none who look to you be | put to shame;

rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.

**Show me your | ways, O Lord,
and teach | me your paths.**

Lead me in your | truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.

**Remember, O Lord, your compas- | sion and love,
for they are from | everlasting.**

Remember not the sins of my youth and | my transgressions;

remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your good- | ness, O Lord.

You are gracious and up- | right, O Lord;

therefore you teach sinners | in your way.

You lead the low- | ly in justice

and teach the low- | ly your way.

A Reading from Paul’s Letter to the Philippians — Philippians 2:1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,

but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name that is above every name,

so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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

Grace-filled Word for creating generous hearts. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation** — *ELW Setting Two*

“Alleluia”

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

***Gospel** — Matthew 21:23-32

The Gospel of Matthew, the 21st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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?” 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. 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?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” 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.

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. 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. 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 the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Moments with the Children — “Loosen Your Grip”

Sermon — “Saying YES”

Pastor Steve Kidder

The chief priests and elders doubted Christ's authority, but this hymn written by Martin Luther contains a simple statement of faith: "Lord Jesus Christ, your power made known, for you are Lord of lords alone."

***Hymn — no. 517**

"Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word"

***The Apostles' Creed**

P: Let us confess our faith together:

**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 power of 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.**

***Prayers of Intercession**

A: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment. Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Lead us in justice as we pray for those in government, the military, and other positions of authority. Give them humble and willing hearts, looking to the needs of others. We also pray for our enemies. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Trusting your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way. Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Teach us your paths as we pray for this congregation. Unite us in your love as we labor together for the sake of the gospel. We give thanks for all the saints. Keep us fearless in our faith and certain of your resurrection. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Offering

Music During Offering

"Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun"

Setting by Nancy Raabe
Bonse Aba Singers

You are invited into this prayer, where our vows to God are renewed and we ask for direction to follow Christ's guidance throughout the day.

*Awake, my soul, and with the sun thy daily stage of duty run;
shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise to pay thy morning sacrifice.*

*God, I my vows to thee renew; disperse my sins as morning dew;
guard my first springs of thought and will, and with thyself my spirit fill.*

*Direct, control, suggest, this day, all I design or do or say;
that all my powers, with all their might, in thy sole glory may unite.*

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

-Thomas Ken

***Offering Prayer**

A: Holy God, giver of all good things, receive the gifts we bring, fruit of the earth and the work of human hands, that they may be used to your purposes for life and love in the world. **Amen.**

we SHARE the meal

***Great Thanksgiving & Preface** — page 129, front of hymnal, ELW Setting Two

***“Holy, Holy, Holy”** — page 130, front of hymnal, ELW Setting Two

***Words of Institution and Lord’s Prayer**

P: 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.

We remember Christ - our example of good stewardship - who taught 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.**

Communion will be served at the rail this morning; the ushers will guide you forward. During this time, we sing two hymns from the “Commitment Discipleship” section of the hymnal, yearning for the Spirit to kindle within us and promising to serve Jesus throughout life.

Connecting to the lesson from Philippians, we can take our cues from the servant Jesus and follow his example. We are “called by worship to...service.”

***Invitation to the Table**

P: Jesus invites you to this table with no exception. Come, eat and live.

Distribution of Communion

“Lamb of God” — page 135, front of hymnal, ELW Setting Two

Hymn — no. 804

“Come Down, O Love Divine”

Hymn — no. 810

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

Prayer After Communion

P: Holy Jesus, in this meal you have fed and nourished us to work in your beloved world. Send us now, filled with yourself and strengthened by your Spirit to live your love for others. **Amen.**

we are SENT to serve the world

Announcements

***Sending Hymn** — no. 712

“Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service”

*Blessing & Dismissal

You can find the words to this **postlude** in the hymnal at no. 506, a profound text by Delores Dufner.

P: The God of grace, ☩ Jesus Christ, the example of stewardship, and the Spirit who kindles generosity, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

A: Go in peace. You are God's hands at work in the world! **Thanks be to God!**

***Postlude** — "The Word of God is Source and Seed" Setting by Sherri Hansen

Acknowledgements

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Worship Assistants

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Substitute Pastor: Steve Kidder

Director of Music: Emily Bruflat

Audio/Video: Brett Petersen, Ivy McHugh

Musician: Bonse Aba Singers

Assisting Minister: John Bipes

Greeter: Cindy Nadeau, Paul Szbynski

Reader: Barb Wilkinson

Ushers: John Nadeau, Bill Kautt

Communion Preparers: Banks Family

Communion Servers: Sharon Domeier, Barb Wilkinson,

Lynn Kidder

Bread Bakers: Lynn Kidder

Acolytes: Harley Samuelson/Nihla Hoenke

Announcements

- Today was Rally Day for Sunday School! Thank you to all who joined us this morning! Join us for Sunday School class and Youth Choir next Sunday, October 8th from 9:00am-9:55am!
- Thanks to our youth worship assistants, who are starting their rotation for the fall! Your help during worship, along with the help of everyone who signs up, is very appreciated! This is a great opportunity to make sure that you get signed up as a reader, greeter, usher, or communion assistant after church today.
- Thank you to some of our confirmation families (Szybnskis/McHughs/Kruegers), who are providing and serving Fellowship refreshments after worship today!
- Altar flowers are given by Sharon Domeier Mary and Ann Scharf in memory of their parents, Frank & Edna Sieber.
- Your Estimate of Giving cards are due next Sunday! Please bring them to worship to be placed in the offering plates. If you can't be here next Sunday, we would appreciate having them dropped off in the church office between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Monday - Friday this week. We are so grateful for your gifts, which allow us to offer many ministries both inside and outside of this church!
- Two weeks from today on October 15, a couple of exciting things are happening. First, our Stewardship Committee has been hard at work planning The Generosity Project. We will have worship in the Dining Hall. Intrigued? You'll have to come and check it out! You're invited back to church at 4:00 p.m. that afternoon for Chad Winterfeldt's organ recital to celebrate the completed repairs!

Prayers

We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Erika Schuldt, Ursula McRostie, Karen Wendroth, Allen Storkson, Gene Roemhildt, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Claire Cardwell, Ella Twaddle, Tim Schwartz, Carol Peterson, Sarah Smith, Gretchen Bray, Bob and Kay Moline, Takhmina White, and Jim Wendroth.

- We pray for Allison Ellingson, former FLC employee, who was recently diagnosed with cancer.