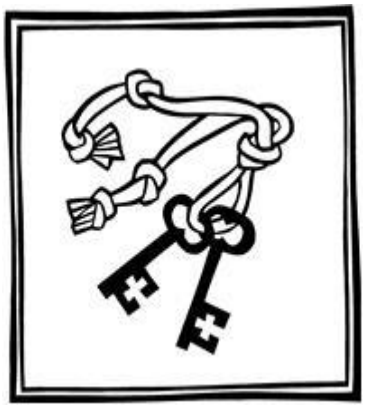


August 23, 2026 ☩
13th Sunday after Pentecost

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

"God's Work. Our Hands. To serve ALL people."

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

P: Indicates the Presider. AM: Indicates the Assisting Minister.

We Gather

Prelude - "Toccata in F major" Dieterich Buxtehude

Words of Welcome

Gathering hymn – no. 645 "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation"

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose compassion endures forever.
Amen.
Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God, **we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**
Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.
Amen.

***Apostolic Greeting**

P: 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** -

***Hymn of Praise** – no. 525 "You Are Holy"

***Prayer of the Day** P: O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

We Listen to God's Word

First Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6

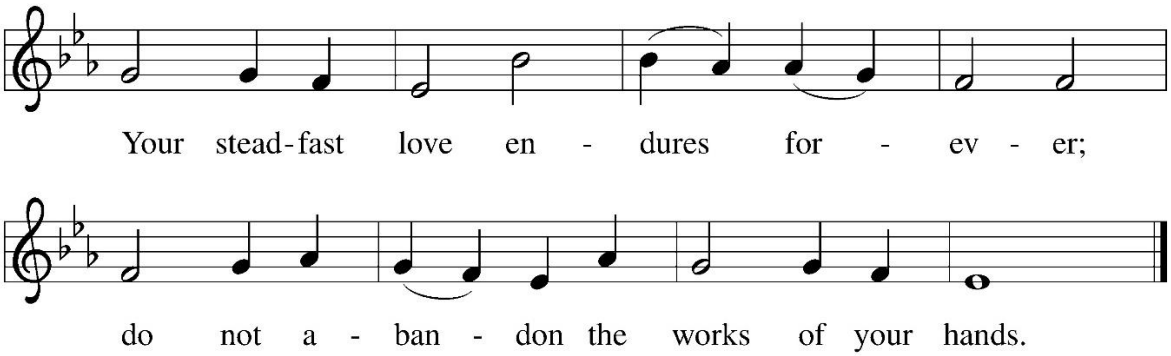
1 Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
you who seek the LORD.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn
and to the quarry from which you were dug.
2 Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah, who bore you,
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.
3 For the LORD will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the LORD;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.
4 Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation,
for a teaching will go out from me
and my justice for a light to the peoples.
5 I will bring near my deliverance swiftly;
my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.
6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens
and look at the earth beneath,
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and those who live on it will die like gnats,
but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 138 – *Please sing refrain as directed*

Psalm 138 (Refrain 2)

Thomas Pavlechko



1 I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart;
before the gods I will sing your praise.
2 **I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name,**
because of your steadfast love and faithfulness;
for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.
3 When I called, you answered me;
you increased my strength within me.
4 **All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O LORD,**
when they have heard the words of your mouth.- *refrain*
5 They will sing of the ways of the LORD,
that great is the glory of the LORD.
6 **The LORD is high, yet cares for the lowly,**
perceiving the haughty from afar.
7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe;
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand shall save me.
8 **You will make good your purpose for me;**
O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works of your hands. - *refrain*

Second Reading: Romans 12:1-8

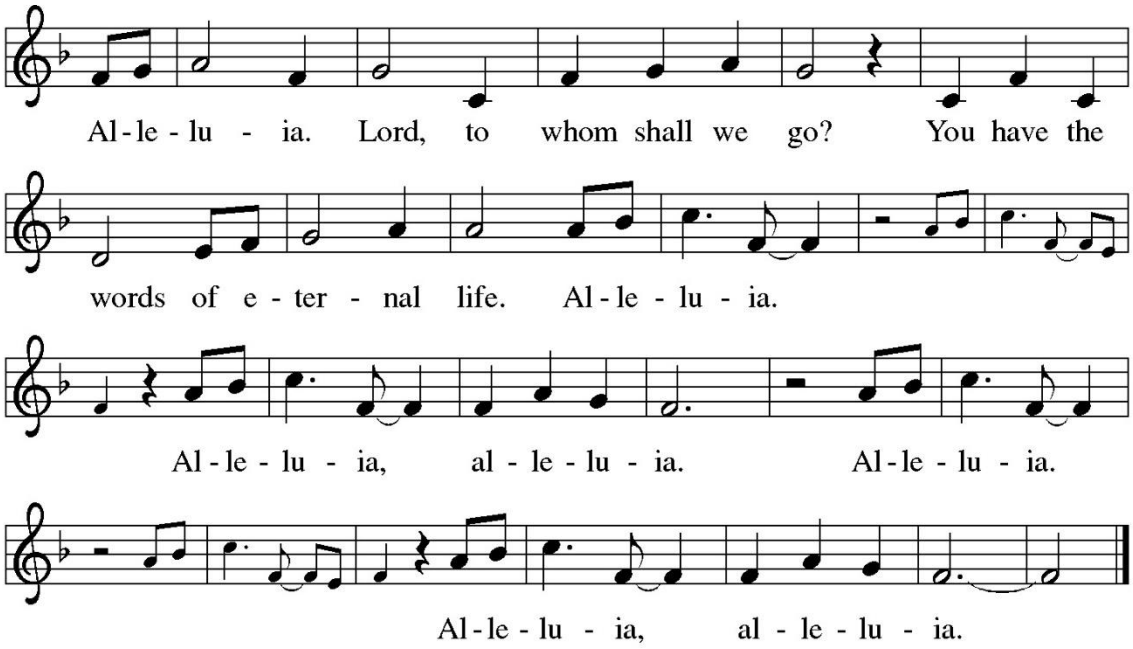
1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure

of faith that God has assigned. [4] For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, [5] so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. [6] We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; [7] ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; [8] the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation –**



***Gospel:** Matthew 16:13-20

Before the reading: The Gospel of Matthew, the 16th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[13] Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" [14] And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." [15] He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" [16] Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." [17] And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. [18] And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. [19] I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [20] Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

Sermon – "Who do YOU say that I am?" Deacon Brenda Handel-Johnson

Hymn of the day – no. 652 "Built on a Rock"

*__The Apostles Creed__

P: Together let us profess our faith:

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.

*__Prayers of Intercession__ –

AM: With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

At the conclusion of each petition: Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

AM: Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*__Sign of Peace__

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Please offer one another some sign of Christ's peace.

Offering – For electronic giving please see Refrigerator Page for QR code and ***Thank you!***

Offering Music Trio: "All Creatures of Our God and King" Arr. Jason W. Krug

***Offering Prayer**

AM: Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **Amen.**

We Share God's Holy Meal

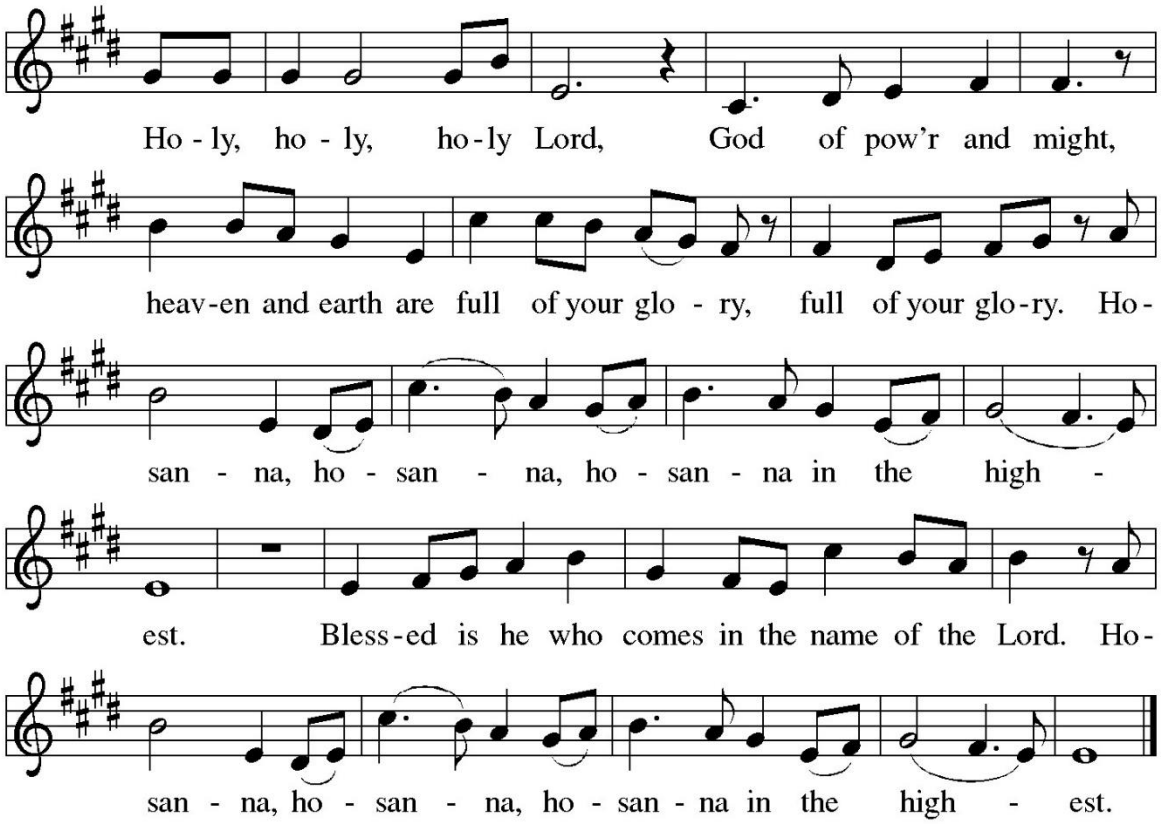
Great Thanksgiving - *(spoken)*

The Lord be with you. **And also 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.**

The thanksgiving continues with the preface, the assembly responds:



*__Words of Institution and The Lord's Prayer__

Together let us pray as Jesus taught us saying: **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 the Table__ – P: Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

Distribution of Communion - *we will be serving Holy Communion continuously.*
Hymns during communion:
No. 623 "Rock of Ages"
No. 597 "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less"

Prayer After Communion
P: Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. **Amen.**

We Go in Peace

Announcements

*__Sending Hymn__ – no. 333 "Jesus Is a Rock in a Weary Land"

*__Blessing & Dismissal__

P: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.
Amen.
AM: Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!
Thanks be to God.

Postlude – "Voluntary" Seth Bingham

In Worship Today:

Pastor: Chris Culuris
Preacher: Deacon Brenda Handel-Johnson
Assisting Minister: Grace Timm
Organist: David Fienen
Musicians: Becca Carpenter – flute
Carrie Stelter – cello
Nancy Timm - handbells

Ushers: Tom Thorkelson
Communion Preparers: Mike & Diane Stewart
Communion Servers: John & Aileen Bipes
Bread Baker: Diane Stewart

Audio/Video: Brett Petersen

Prayers: We pray for those on our long-term list: Betty Gustafson, Paul Aasen, Karen Handel, Erika Schuldt, Ruth Edberg, Bob Lamb, Dorothy and Paul Lutz, Steve Erickson, Barbra Grabowski (Ted Kunze's sister), Garrett Paul, Mary Ann Scharf, Kay Moline, Kevin Nicholson (Betty Thompson's nephew), Leah Crosby and baby (niece of Aileen Bipes), Hazel Adelman (niece of Mary Gaebler), Lisa Handel-Dalvand, family of Barb Moss (friend of Deacon Brenda).

Acknowledgments
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FLC Refrigerator Page - take this home with you!

Worship, Education and Service:

- **Fellowship** will be provided and served by Cindy Nadeau, Carla Demers, and Carolyn Trnka.
- **First Forum Today** – following worship we will gather in the Dining Hall to hear our Stewardship Committee share "The Power of Generosity: ELCA Feature Story." Join us!
- **FLC Director of Choirs and Handbells position is open.** If you are interested in applying for this position to lead Youth and Adult Choirs, or Handbells, please contact Kaari Bly, Pastor Chris, or Deacon Brenda.
- **Rental Assistance:** The need for emergency funds continues as many of our immigrant neighbors who have been recently released were told NOT to return to work. All money collected will be dispersed through the Good Neighbor Diversity Council's Emergency Fund.
- **Personal care donation for SPAF:** FLC is collecting toothbrushes during August. Place any donations in the grocery cart in the Gathering space. Thank you.

Events at FLC and around the area:

- **Are you available to serve as a teacher for our Education Hour this coming school year?** Deacon Brenda is building teams of teachers for our student classes which meet on Wednesday nights. Contact her if you can assist in team teaching this fall.
- **Hymn Sing Next Sunday:** August 30. Place titles of your favorite hymns in the basket on the sign-up table.
- **Furnished basement apartment available for rent** – Please call or text Becky Otterness at 507 327 9739, or email at rebecca.otterness@gmail.com.
- **Coffee and Conversation**- The CCM committee invites you to Diamond Dust Bakery on the first Tuesday of each month for a casual gathering of fellowship, coffee and conversation. It is a chance to connect with old friends and meet new ones! Our first outing will be Tuesday, September 8 at 10:00 am. All are welcome- feel free to bring a friend.
- **Chankaska Creek Winery outing** - Please join fellow FLC members for a relaxed time of Fellowship on Sunday, September 20th! We will meet at the winery at 4:00 pm, (after the Vikings game). If you would like to carpool, please meet in the FLC parking lot at 3:40. We are planning to be outdoors, but we do have a backup plan if it rains. Hope to see you there.
- **Fall Festival Plans Underway**
  Plans for the First Fall Festival are moving forward on Sunday, October 11 from 2 - 4 p.m. We recently received a $1,000 grant from the Chamber of Commerce to offset advertising expenses! A banner and yard signs will be popping up on the FLC lawn adjacent to the sidewalks soon. Lots of help is still needed - look for a sign-up sheet in the gathering space today! Contact Gabriela Roemhildt for more information, 507-420-9566.