February 22, 2026 ☩

First Sunday in Lent

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 -

Words of Welcome

***Gathering Hymn** - no. 319 "O Lord, throughout These Forty Days"

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.
Amen.
Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love. For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.
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__ – page 3, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Prayer of the Day__

P: Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us 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.**

We Listen to God's Word

First Reading: Genesis 2: 15-17;3: 1-7

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep
it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the
garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that
you eat of it you shall die."

3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made.
He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" 2 The
woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said,
'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch
it, or you shall die.' " 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, 5 for God knows that
when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and
evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the
eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she
also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were
opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made
loincloths for themselves. Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 32- *The psalm will be sung responsively by whole verse.*

1 Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven,
and whose sin is | put away!
2 **Happy are they to whom the Lord im- | putes no guilt,**
and in whose spirit there | is no guile!
3 While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away,

because of my groaning | all day long.
4 **For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night;**
my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.
5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- | ceal my guilt.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin.
6 **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of trouble;**
when the great waters overflow, they | shall not reach them.
7 You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.
8 **"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that | you should go;**
I will guide you | with my eye.
9 Do not be like horse or mule, which have no | understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will | not stay near you."
10 **Great are the tribulations | of the wicked;**
but mercy embraces those who trust | in the Lord.
11 Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice | in the Lord;
shout for joy, all who are | true of heart.

Second Reading: Romans 5: 12-19

12 Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death
spread to all because all have sinned 13 for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is
not reckoned when there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those
who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.
15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's
trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus
Christ, abounded for the many. 16 And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the
judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses
brings justification. 17 If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one,
much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness
reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.
18 Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of
righteousness leads to justification and life for all. 19 For just as through the one man's
disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will
be made righteous. Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation** "Return to God" – page 7, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

***Gospel:** Matthew 4: 1-11

The Gospel of Matthew, the 4th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

1 Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. 2 He fasted forty days
and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. 3 The tempter came and said to him, "If you are
the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is
written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of

God.' " [5] Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, [6] saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' " [7] Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

[8] Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, [9] and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." [10] Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' " [11] Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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

Sermon – Pastor Chris Culuris

*__Hymn__ – no. 504 "A Mighty Fortress"

*__The Apostles' Creed__ –
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: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. *After each petition*: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

AM: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **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 scan the QR on announcement page and ***Thank you!***

Offering music

*__Offertory hymn__– page 9, *Now the Feast and Celebration* "As the Grains of Wheat"

*__Offering Prayer__

AM: O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

We Share God's Holy Meal

*__Great Thanksgiving and Preface__ - *(sung)* page 10, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Holy, Holy, Holy__ – page 10, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Words of Institution__

*__The Lord's Prayer__

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: Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

Distribution of Communion - *we will be serving communion continuously.*
Lamb of God – page 13, *Now the Feast and Celebration*
Hymn –no. 325 "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"
Hymn - no. 613 "Thy Holy Wings"

Prayer After Communion
P: God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

We Go in Peace

Announcements

***Sending Hymn** – no. 322 vs. 1-4 "Oh, Love, How Deep"

***Blessing & Dismissal**

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ☩ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

AM: Go in peace. Believe the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

***Postlude**

In Worship Today
Pastor: Chris Culuris
Musician: Kim Beecher
Assisting Minister: Nancy Timm
Director of Choirs: Sarah Chambers

Usher: Tom Thorkelson
Communion Preparer: Bill & Cheryl Kautt
Communion Servers: Aileen Bipes, Cindy Nadeau

Tech: Brett Petersen
Bread Baker: Betsy Bolint

Prayers: We pray for those on our long-term list: Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Gretchen Bray, Lenore Schnobrich, Gloria Kane, Harvey Kane, Karen Handel, Erika Schuldt, Ruth Edberg, Bob Lamb, Dorothy and Paul Lutz, Steve Erickson, Barbra Grabowski (Ted Kunze's sister), Garrett Paul, Chaplain Ben Hilding, Mary Ann Scharf, David Ribar, Nate Tuener (family friend of Bob and Rhoda Stenson), Bruce Gray, and Sandy Grochow.

Acknowledgments

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FLC Refrigerator Page

Worship, Education and Service:

- **Ashes** will be given to those who wish to receive them following worship today.
- **Cemetery Committee** will serve fellowship after worship today.
- **Pontius Pilate's Passion**: This Lenten season, join Annalise Rivas for an exploration of the Passion story like you've never seen it before. Wednesday evenings from 6:45-7:30pm in the Pioneer Parlor, February 11 - April 8.
- **Bread Baking, Holy Communion Prep and Serving Training** – today following worship in the sacristy.
- **We are collecting shampoo and body wash** for the St Peter Area Food Shelf during February. Please drop donations in the box in the gathering space.
- **Stump the Pastor – 6:45pm, Wednesday, February 25.** Place questions in the box outside the Sanctuary. All are invited to attend.
- **We are collecting rental assistance** for families whose wage earners have been detained by ICE agents. Please place cash into labeled envelopes marked "Rental Assistance" on the table in the gathering space.
- **Soup Supper this Wed., Feb. 25, 5:15 – 6:15pm**: CCM and Cemetery Committees are providing our soup supper.

Events at FLC and around the area:

- **WOW Zone Youth Event** – today, 2-4pm. Bowling, laser tag and video games. All families and friends are invited. Please look for Pr. Chris when you arrive.
- **Le Grande Band Concert at FLC on Thursday, February 26** at 7:30 pm., pre-concert talk starts at 6:45 pm.
- **Interested in bystander/upstander training**? See Deacon Brenda or Pastor Chris for more information.
- **The next First Forum is Sunday, March 8** with Blake and Andy from the St. Peter Funeral Home sharing info about funeral planning.
- **FLC is hosting the USD Chamber singers in concert on Thursday, March 19.** We are organizing overnight housing for 40 musicians. Can you provide a bed and breakfast for 2 or more singers? Sign-up sheet is on the table in the Gathering Space or send Deacon Brenda a note and thank you!
- Order forms are available for **Easter flowers** for the altar. Please see ordering sheets on the table in the gathering space.

Please use the QR code below for electronic giving and thank you!

QR offering code